Madam, Why do you use me thus? I never did you any harm as yet. (74)

Mother Alice Samuel

The most strange and admirable discouerie of the three witches of Warboys (1593)

University of Alberta

Dark Sisters: Witches and Prophets in Early Modern England

by

Kirsten C. Uszkalo ©

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in English

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Abstract Speech, Abstract Women

The witch's existence as a way to explain misfortune appears to make her an inversion of the miraculous that the prophet embodies. However, the female prophet's appearance when critical and judicial belief in witches began to dwindle, and during the troubling time of the English Civil Wars and Interregnum, suggests a more complicated relationship. Critics like Phyllis Mack, Hilary Hinds, Keith Thomas, and Stuart Clark have all noted moments of connectivity, but have, for the most part, looked at witches and prophets separately. Even the excellent work done by Diane Purkiss contains no substantial consideration of these intriguing women in conjunction. Early modern English witches and prophets appear, at first glance, to be antithetical, but are actually ideologically contingent. Witches use *maleficium,* an act of witchcraft performed with the intent of causing damage or injury. However, familiars do the witch's dirty work, Satan allows the black magic to happen, and God ultimately authorizes of all of the above. Belief in malefic magic is, at the center, a belief in God's continued interest in the world. The prophet, whose defining characteristic is also God-driven rhetorical power, needs a sympathetic audience, however. Unlike the majority of witches, she calls herself into being and, within the constraints of prophetic discourse, can define *herself.* Although, like the witch, the female prophet attracts criticism, violence, and judgment, she is able to give as good as she gets, and, for most part, has more agency and choice in negotiating her spiritual stance.

For a short period, the witch and female prophet women shared a temporal space, and in some extreme circumstances, their startling similarities enabled them, as in the case of Barbara Blaugdone, to share the same skin. With an eye to the fact that chronology places most witches before female prophets, and that prophets published without censorship, this study will investigate how the witch and female prophet speak to each other, and the similar ways in which their identities were constructed through language, bodies, subject extensions, and local communities. In doing so, we can see how, with greater agency and success, the prophet organically took over from the witch the role of proving the existence of God and explaining misfortune to a world turned upside down.

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If this dissertation is about the creation of identity for the witches and prophets, its production is about the creation of identity for its author as well. When, at times, my tongue has spoken heresies, there have been those who have both kept it in check and those who loosed it even more. When my body has betrayed me, I have had hands help to pull me back out of the water and hands that have let me go so I could swim. When I have asked who I am, my own community has helped me answer, in multiple voices, that I am one of their own. And, in an experience which seems to double like my own text, this second self, this extension of my own identity, has helped define me as I have defined it.

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I dedicate this work to you Mom, and to decisions made in raspberry fields.

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Introduction: Over the River and through the Woods

In a fit season [to] bring out of my treasure of these things, and discover these monsters and rocks, that so they might be of some use to godly people. (3)
--Thomas Edwards *Gangraena* (1646)

The source of the witch and prophet's power lay not only on the tip of their tongues, but in the power their peers believed was seated there. Stuart Clark begins *Thinking with Demons* (1997) by considering the real power of language and the reality of witchcraft in early modern England. Clark applies linguistic theory to witchcraft studies, looking at "the relationship between language and the extra-linguistic world" and at language itself, to "uncover the linguistic circumstances that enabled the utterances and actions associated with witchcraft belief to convey meaning" (6). Those who believed in the validity of contemporary prophecy, like those who believed in the power of malefic speech, in fact thought that "their beliefs did correspond with reality" (Clark 7). The reality of witchcraft depended on a contemporary belief in the witch's ability to wield malefic magic, just as the reality of prophecy in early modern England depended on a belief in the prophet's ability to prophesy legitimately. When witchcraft and prophecy were, in this sense, *real*, the witch and prophet who claimed ownership of their own words were powerful, dangerous, and suspect. While the prophet often conscientiously attempted to defer ownership of her vision to God, the witch sometimes made the mistake of taking credit for her own linguistic power. Could it be that prophets merely negotiated their public positions better than their dark sisters did?

To their contemporaries, the witch and prophet were recognizable as archetypal opposites. The witch's behaviors were exceptions that proved the divine rule. As Clark argues, "the nature of Satan, the character of hell, and above all, the ritual activities of the witches [as sharing] a vocabulary of misrule" were used to "establish and condemn the properties of a disorderly world" ("Inversion" 150-51). According to Peter Elmer, witchcraft functioned, on this symbolic level, as "a sign of divine disapproval," but, more importantly, on an essentially practical level, it called out evildoers (104). Prophecy also had practical, as well as symbolical, functions. The prophet's words confirmed God's active interest in the world and offered practical suggestions for the way the world could be improved. If prophecy reminded early modern England that God was still watching, witchcraft gave it a way to articulate its frustrations, as well as a helpful way to pinpoint a concrete, accessible, and ultimately killable source—the witch.

Here we might look to find a clean black line at the center of a spiritual dichotomy separating witch from prophet. Seeing these women in opposition seems to be the best way to see them at all. However, Monique Wittig laments that the dark side of the Aristotelian divide "to which female, dark, bad, and unrest belong has also been augmented by slave, Other, different" ("Homo Sum" 52). "Every philosopher of our modern age," she argues, "including the linguists, the psychoanalysts, the anthropologists, will tell us that without these precise categories of opposition (of difference), one cannot shape oneself, there is an impossibility of meaning as outside of society in the asocial" (*ibid.*). It seems foolish then to try to cast the prophet as the light side of the witch, when all women are already relegated to the darkness. Further, Clark's proposition that "witchcraft was construed dialectically in terms of what it was not; what was significant about it was not its substance but the system of oppositions that it established and fulfilled" gets us close to understanding how the witch and prophet functioned within their own communities; however, it does not reach far enough to contextualize them in terms of their relationship with one another (*Thinking* 9). The witch *seems* to be an inversion of the prophetic: she is aligned with Satan, and the prophet with God; she suckles familiar demons, and the prophet is fed manna or survives on the host (or no food at all); she speaks for herself and does the Devil's work, and the prophet negates her own voice and does God's bidding. Although antithesis does seem obvious at the bluntest level of symbolic representation, it falls apart rapidly in the face of specific cases and their contexts.

The structure of opposition predicts that the witch should align with social disorder and divine disapproval, and the prophet with law, order, and godliness. However, this was not the case. Both biblical and contemporary prophets had little interest in maintaining status quo. The prophets discussed in this work appeared during the tumultuous period of the English Civil Wars and the Interregnum (1640-1660). During this era, many English women and men anxiously awaited the end of days and the kingdom of Christ, who would "call and gather a people" to "rule the world by general assemblies; or church-parliaments . . . till Christ come in person" (*Certain Queries*). This millenarian[1] impulse operated against both social and doctrinal orthodoxy. Female prophets of this era saw it as their job, in part, to prepare the world for the Second Coming; they may have contextualized their speech within God's, but their orientation towards the divine future meant that they had limited interest in maintaining contemporary law and order. Although religious discourse had traditionally been a safe harbor for women writing privately, according to Hilda Smith, "theological treatises or anything verging on a sermon," as well as "critique[s] of ecclesiastical structure," were off-limits for women (3). Visionary women and prophets dived into all these arenas with gusto. As well as writing and preaching on topics out of bounds to women, non-conformists, Nigel Smith notes, "tended toward separating themselves from the sinful world . . . turning away from association with the established Church, and its complex structure and traditions of parish life" (*Perfection* 413). These women verbally and physically turned their backs on established order and, in consequence, according to Lois Schwoerer, were "depicted as uninformed, unruly, disruptive of order, and even more damaging, unchaste" (60). The voice of the prophet was, as Blake's Isaiah articulates in "The Marriage of Heaven and Hell," the "voice of honest indignation" (Plate 12).

---

[1] The OED defines millenarianism as "the belief in a future thousand-year age of blessedness, beginning with or culminating in the Second Coming of Christ. In extended use: belief in a future golden age of peace, justice, and prosperity, typically posited on an end to the existing world order."

The permeability of the categories "witch" and "prophet" also argues against a strict opposition between the two. The witch might have, under different circumstances, become a prophet, and the prophet, meeting hostility, might be accused of witchcraft. Renowned prophets Anna Trapnel and Barbara Blaugdone spoke and wrote with an authority which, they claimed, originated with God, yet when they prophesied and traveled, they encountered both warm and hostile receptions, and met with threats and allegations of witchcraft. Similarly, Mother Waterhouse, Mother Lakeland, and Anne Baker, according to the pamphlets that recount their stories, used religious and even prophetic rhetoric, yet they were condemned and executed as witches. Early modern England saw the witch, as Christina Larner neatly sums up in "Crime of Witchcraft," as "by definition, an abnormal person" (206). The same can be said, however, for the prophet. She was, to borrow the words of the Architect in the Wachowski Brothers' *Matrix: Reloaded*: the "remainder of an unbalanced equation . . . [but] not unexpected, and thus not beyond a measure of control" (Matrix).[2] The presence of the prophet might not have been routine, but neither was it unbelievable. Thus both witches and prophets were anomalous parts of the contemporary system, necessary characters in a full social, as well as supernatural, cast. They were the articulation of nightmares and prayers. Stuart Clark proposes that witchcraft was, within the reality of everyday existence, an "idiom in a very popular language—the language of misfortune" (441); if witchcraft is the language of misfortune, we should we look at prophecy as the (everyday) language of the miraculous.

---

[2] In *Matrix Reloaded*, this conversation takes place between the Architect of the Matrix and Neo, whose prophetic position enables him to see into the future, move between the machine world and real world, and find those within the Matrix who want out. Neo, the prophet, in this context, is a necessary byproduct of the system of controls within the Matrix.

The witch and prophet, dependant on their recognized linguistic power, on order and inversion, and, ultimately, on God and Satan to define them, are therefore necessarily understood together. Clark proposes that "the witch – like Satan himself – could only be a contingent being, always a function of another, not an independent entity" (*Thinking* 9). To help wrangle some kind of comprehensive theory out of a literature that consists of (in modern terms) hearsay, real crime dramas, and tabloid reports, we might be tempted to place the women in these accounts along some kind of continuum, locating them on a scale from blackness to light. However, the closer one moves in to look at these women, especially the witch and prophet, the blurrier the line becomes. The darkness, which once promised to signify separation, unfolds as a fertile space of similarities. Here we begin to discover possibilities that might locate the stitch that draws these women together. The witch and the prophet are contingent beings, functions of Satan and God respectively, in that they are also contingent on one another in a kind of binary, rather than an antithesis. As early modern Europeans "confronted binary opposition more as a conceptual and moral phenomenon, and as an intellectual ideal, than as something actually practiced in their institutions and social groupings," the witch and prophet might be antithetical in symbolic terms, while, in reality, there was much more grey to these dark sisters (Clark 39).

Like Donna Haraway's "A Cyborg Manifesto" (1991), this study "focuses on transgressed boundaries, potent fusions, and dangerous possibilities which progressive people might explore as part of needed political work" (154). Haraway argues, as Wittig does, that classifying the world in opposites allows and encourages domination (154); in an attempt to *hear*, rather than dominate, the witch and prophet in early modern England, this study will look for other ways to understand the relationships between them. The often-advertised differences between these dark sisters say much more about power of the men who classified them than they do about the women themselves. In looking at these women as opposites, through Joseph Glanvill or Thomas Edwards' Christian tunnel vision, we reproduce the domination these men were invested in protecting, because "single vision," as Haraway suggests, "produces worse illusions than double vision, or many headed monsters" (*ibid.*) By looking for conjunction as well as opposition, by considering these women as contingent beings, and by looking at the transgressed boundaries and potent fusions, we can begin to tease out subtleties which point to intriguing spaces of natural connectivity. Our vision of early modern English witches and prophets can only be clear when it is refocused and allowed to compound. These women, who were believed to be able to foresee the future or change its course, whose social influence allowed them to counsel and to damn, might have shared the same skin as easily as they shared the ability to change reality with their words.

Give It to Me in Writing

The study of witchcraft and prophecy is always already a study of the real and tangible efficacy of language. The witch and the prophet both speak with power; the witch's commands to her familiar and the prophet's declarations from God produce concrete results in their communities. These women also provoked an enormous outpouring of words from their contemporaries. Although a wealth of unpublished seventeenth-century witchcraft material remains housed in archives, this study will focus on representations of witches in contemporary published material. It will also use published prophetic tracts as a major source for its investigation of early modern female prophets, rather than dipping into the equally rich stacks of manuscripts kept by the British Library and the Society of Friends Library in London. I have chosen to confine this study to published materials in order to represent the influence of the public and the medium of publication in the production of identity.[3] Publications about witches and prophets fed the same market that would later buy printed criminal reports and gallows confessions. In *Women and Crime in the Street Literature of Early Modern England*, Sandra Clark argues that "only unusual crimes were salable as commodities" (ix); crimes by women were natural candidates for commodification, since women who "committed an act defined as criminal [were] doubly deviant, infringing the norms of gender and of social order which constructed women as secondary, inferior and subject to male authority" (*ibid.*). Both the witch and the female prophet, with their unnatural powers and inherent disruptiveness, were thus of interest to contemporary publishers.

---

[3] In "Understanding Witchcraft? Accusers' Stories in Print in Early Modern England," Marion Gibson argues that "there is a change in the representation of witchcraft in witchcraft pamphlets in the 1590s" (42), and that this change substantially influenced subsequent ideas about witches. "Witchcraft changes," Gibson claims, "because the narrative genre, rather than any inaccessible reality, changes over time" (47). This study likewise looks at how published texts created the realities of witchcraft, but looks forwards to the ends, rather than the means.

Early modern English texts about witches and prophets were not published solely to provide readers with the titillating pleasure of seeing freakish women exposed (although this was certainly part of the appeal). They claimed to offer examples of what not to do and, more importantly, who not to be. Edmond Bower's *Dr. Lamb Revived* (1653) touts itself as "necessary for all good Christians to read, as a caveat to look to themselves, that they be not seduced by such inticements" (1), and Thomas Edward's vitriol-filled *Gangraena* (1646) ingenuously offers to "discover these monsters and rocks, that so they might be of some use to godly people, to make them afraid of forsaking the publike Assemblies, and joyning to separated Churches where these monsters daily breed" (3). Marion Gibson points out that what the witchcraft narrative said, and "how accurately it reflects real events, is less important when we consider why they wanted to say it. How does the pamphlet present the justice system and its response to witchcraft?"(75). These texts are plainly as much about social control as reader entertainment.

"Witch" and "prophet" were therefore public titles, conferred by and defined in public discourse. These texts, like the plethora of spiritual tracts written by women in the seventeenth century, actively create witches and prophets by sending the world out to look for them; one must always beware, warn these authors, or one might somehow find him- or herself represented to the public as a witch or a prophet. For this reason, this study concentrates its focus on published texts which create and proliferate the fear of witches among their readers, and enable public prophesy to occur.

Girls Only

The witches and prophets explored herein are exclusively women.[4] More women than men arrived at English courthouses accused as witches,[5] and more women arrived at the presses, as authors or subjects of witchcraft literature, than ever had before. Why did women find themselves accused of witchcraft? Clark argues that "if witch-prosecuting was, as Joan Kelly has written, the 'single most horrendous expression [of misogyny] in early modern Europe,' then we ought, in particular, to find woman-hating in abundance in those who most actively supported it. . . . The problem is that we do not" (112). Witch trials may not have been based on woman-hating, but they were woman-centered. Women acted as victims, witnesses, accusers, and suspects. The power-plays between women in small communities, the feasibility of successfully accusing and persecuting other women, and the possibility of using a witchcraft accusation to punish (supposed) crimes which were otherwise unpunishable, are all reasons that women may have persecuted other women with this charge. Robert Muchembled sees women as occupying a central place within the propagation of witchcraft, proposing that "women [were] the exact equivalent, in their own culture, as demonologists and judges" were in theirs (142). Women may have taught and propagated the belief in witchcraft to root out a poison which could taint the entire gender, and pollute their own homes. If one could provide legal proof that *certain* women were witches, then womankind in general could hope to escape similar suspicions.

---

[4] This study looks exclusively at female witches and prophets; for an extensive study on male witches, see Laura Apps and Andrew Gow's *Male Witches in Early Modern Europe* (2003), and Robin Briggs' "Men against Women: The Gendering of Witchcraft" in *Witches and Neighbors: The Social and Cultural Context of European Witchcraft* (1996).

[5] Although it is difficult to determine exactly how many women were involved in witchcraft prosecutions, Christina Larner proposes that 80% of those accused were female, and Stevie Davies arrives at a similar figure of 80-90% (Davies 44). Darren Oldridge offers a geographic breakdown, suggesting that the proportion of women was roughly 50% in France and 70% in Germany and Scotland, while in England, Hungary and Denmark, "90 percent of witches were female" ("Gender" 268).

Women may have starred in the majority of English witch trials; however, the women who seized the prophetic stage with vigor and vitality were a minority. Phyllis Mack counts thirty-seven well-known female visionaries operating between 1640 and 1650, and one hundred and ten "prophets, Missionaries and Writers" operating between 1650 and 1660 (413-20); their prophetic brothers comprised the majority of the chorus.

Though we still have access to these women's prophetic texts, few have arrived in the twenty-first century without some kind of editorial interference, which seems to move us further away from the words of visionary women. Close reading enables us slowly to strip away layers of editorial addition, increasing our proximity to the prophet's own words. Prophets actively participated in their prophecies; their published texts, although riddled with commentary, are still essentially their own. They fashioned their own identities as authoritative women of vision. Likewise, the witchcraft narrative is the result of a series of negotiations between the accused and the accuser. Using familiar linguistic keys, the witch might fashion herself as powerful, or negotiate her own story as a tragedy or as a misunderstanding. However, even when acknowledging all the people involved in its production, both witchcraft narrative and prophecy are still the stories of the witch and the prophet. In many cases, the prophet and the witch were cogent and aware authors, negotiating their self-representation as much as possible in a society where, according to Diane Purkiss, "it is questionable whether . . . any texts [were] authored 'purely' by women" (*The Witch* 93). Authorship is perhaps more problematic in depositions and witch trial narratives, where the women being quoted were dead before the texts were published, than it is in prophetic texts, where God is cited as author, and male editors and publishers mediate the prophet's voice. Even the most passive prophet might have some say in her textual representation, whereas the witch would not. As the focus of this thesis is not authorial attribution, we will assume copious mediation, reading the words written by or attributed to these women through a critical, yet open, lens.

In *Little Horns Doom and Down Fall* (1651), prophet Mary Cary articulates the subject position of the author as that of an instrument, which can do no more "then a pensill, or pen could do, when no hand guides it" (A5). The "tension between the agency of the woman who speaks for herself and the passivity of the 'Empty Nothing Creature' who is a vessel for inspiration," as Erika Longfellow succinctly argues in *Women and Religious Writing in Early Modern England* (2004), "creates a difficulty for feminist critics" (150). Hilary Hinds attempts to reconcile the difficulty of the prophetic position by defining the prophet as an "author-figure," a subject position which, she argues, rectifies the "figure's relationship with the text which she produced and in which she is produced" (81). Although Hilary Hinds' treatment of the prophet as an "author-figure" in *God's Englishwomen* has been a crucial contribution in the ongoing struggle to relate the early modern female prophet to her text, it does not push far enough past the idea that "the instrument is a doer . . . [since] the power it had to be given was the power to act" (99). In wielding the pen, prophets may "open themselves up to being read as signs, but at the same time are themselves manipulators–or to use a more recent term, theorists–of gender" (Longfellow 150). The prophet creates and manipulates her own subject position much as she creates and manipulates her prophecies. Although God might send the melody, the prophet, as an inspired musician, has to interpret, orchestrate, and perform the opus.

Christina Larner's construction of the witch eloquently answers the final question of why this study of early English witches and prophets looks only to women.

> The archetypal witch is an independent adult woman who does not conform to the male idea of proper female behavior. She is assertive; she does not require or give love (though she may enchant); she does not nurture men or children, nor care for the weak. She has the power of words – to defend herself or to curse. In addition, she may have other, more mysterious powers which do not derive from

> the established order. All women threaten male hegemony with their exclusive power to give life; and social order depends on women conforming to male ideals of female behavior. The identification of any woman as a witch will, therefore, set against her not only males, but also conforming females and their children. ("Witch-hunting" 273)

Larner's witch could just as easily be one of England's fiery-eyed prophets. The seemingly most benign of prophets, the girls who spoke from their beds, or whose songs were recorded, related, and published by a male editor, still disobeyed and talked back to their mothers, forsook their chores and responsibilities, and assumed an elevated place in the household from which to preach. Some women, despite the personal and social costs involved, ran from their children, their husbands, and even England to speak as prophets; those who stayed home proudly threw over their tubs and leapt on them to preach. According to the social mores of their time, these were not good girls; by prophesying, they "threatened established orders and hierarchies" (Purkiss "Producing" 141). The women we hear from in this study have voices as a result of fitting into one of two categories; the majority of witches were women, and women were able to preach because the Bible recognized them as prophets of the End of Days. Neither followed the regular rules.

Which Witch is Which? Prophesy/Prophecy/Prophet

If it is necessary to look at witches and prophets as congruent women, it is likewise important to look at how these women operated within their communities. Women did not suddenly appear as witches, scratching at their neighbors' doors. Nor did the interpersonal tensions between women explode into trials and executions until an accuser came to understand the accused as a witch. The OED defines a witch as a "female magician or sorceress" who is "supposed to have dealings with the devil or evil spirits and to be able by their co-operation to perform supernatural acts."[6] In practice, however, the parameters that defined a witch were less distinct. In fact, a woman first had to be seen as the proper kind of candidate, and publicly labeled a witch, before the law could be brought in. The body of the accused needed to morph through being read by others, her identity needed to extend to include a familiar, and her new job title needed to receive the forthright endorsement of her community, before she could even begin to be publicly persecuted as a witch.

Witches can be roughly divided into three categories: women with long familial reputations as witches or associated with suspected witches; cunning women; and magical practitioners. Women like Mother Sutton and Mother Waterhouse had long-standing and familial reputations for witchcraft; witnesses dredged up supposed events from years past in order to corroborate suspicions of guilt. The second category of witches, the cunning women, could assert that they were only healers, and might have the backing of influential clients to attest to their godliness. Cunning women like Joan Peterson, who claimed she could merely *un*-witch people and things, were understood at a local level, but seldom differentiated from witches at a legal one.[7] Peter Elmer argues that cunning folk, for the most part, successfully conducted their operations under the official radar.

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[6] Ironically, considering the prevalence of women targeted in English witch-hunts, the first definition given in the OED is actually: "[a] man who practices witchcraft or magic; a magician, sorcerer, wizard."

[7] George Gifford sees cunning folk, or "cunning men and wise women," as recipients of Satan's teachings, so that, through the public display of their power, Satan "may be sought unto and honored as God. These things taking root in the hearts of the people, and so making them afraide of Witches, and raising up suspitions and rumors of sundry innocent persons, many giltles are uppon mens othes condemned to death, and much innocent bloud is shed" (A3). The cunning women who feature in other printed texts of this period usually appear as frauds (see *The brideling, sadling and ryding, of a rich churle in Hampshire, by the subtill practise of one Iudeth Philips, a professed cunning woman, or fortune teller* (1594)) or outright witches (see Edmond Bower's *Doctor Lamb revived* (1653), and *The tryall and examination of Mrs. Joan Peterson* (1658)). James Sharpe argues that "cunning folk were important in the popular beliefs of the period, and, indeed, it is possible in many areas to find as much evidence of their activities as those of the bad witches" (*Witchcraft* 10). Some other secondary sources on cunning women include: Owen Davies' *Cunning-Folk* (2003), which looks at cunning folk as practitioners of popular rather than malevolent magic; Kristeen Macpherson Bardell's "Beyond Pendle: The 'Lost' Lancashire Witches" (2002), pp. 105-22, an investigation of cases of beneficial magic; Keith Thomas' *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (1971), pp. 212-52; and Alan Macfarlane's *Witchcraft in Tudor and Stuart England* (1970), pp. 115-34.

Most people, "even if they accused a witch or suggested some supernatural origin for an affliction, preferred to employ relatively private counter-measures" (143); for these counter-measures, they might very well consult a cunning woman. The third category of witches includes women like Anne Bodenham and Joan Harrison, who seem to have practiced magic for profit.[8] Although Bodenham, servant of and student to the infamous Dr. Lamb,[9] was convicted of witchcraft, she claimed to have practiced only the magic she learned from him, emphasizing her authority by referencing her original text. Likewise, *The most cruell and bloody murther committed by an Inkeepers wife* (1606) describes how Harrison committed her malefic acts using an inscribed parchment,[10] human bones, and human hair (C2v-C3). In addition to supernatural texts and sympathetic magic, women like these might employ charms and spells, or work necromancy. Although they worked magic using select traditional tools, they were accused and executed as witches.[11]

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[8] Although "witchcraft" and "magic" are often differentiated as 'low' (traditional) practices versus 'high' (educated) practices, I believe that opportunity played as large a part as education in determining who was a witch and who was a magician. Few women examined in this study would have had the time, education, or resources to participate in astrological work, like William Lilly, or alchemical writing, like Francis Bacon. Likewise, many of the spells in magical texts like the *Ars Notoria*, which might be employed to exact revenge, find lost objects, or inflame love, would have been too time-, labor-, and cost-intensive for use by early modern women of the middle ranks and lower classes. The attributes that divide magic from witchcraft are quite slippery in this regard.

[9] According to the anonymous author of *A briefe description of the notorious life of John Lambe otherwise called Doctor Lambe*. Together with his ignominious death (1628), Doctor Lamb was a fortune-teller for hire, "telling of Fortunes, helping of diuerse to lost goods, shew to young people the faces of their Husbands or Wives, that should be, in a Christall glasse: reuealing to wives the escapes and faults of their Husbands, and to husbands of their wiues" so that "many mischiefs and divisions were wrought betweene marryed people" (2). Although he was twice tried and convicted as a witch, his arrests merely relocated his medical and spiritual practice to King's Bench Prison. He eventually perished in an act of popular justice: he was torn apart in the streets of London by an angry mob. Dr. Lamb became synonymous with crystal-gazing and corruption; John Webster associates him with "pretending to reveal things in Crystalglasses or Beryls" as was "well known to be pretended by Doctor Lamb," and Peter Heyley records Dr. Lamb's infamy in a poem condemning the Duke of Buckingham: "Let Charles and George doe what they can / The Duke shall die like Doctor Lamb" (65). For further information on Dr. Lamb, see Gregory Durston's *Witchcraft and Witch Trials: A History of English Witchcraft and its Legal Perspectives, 1542-1736* (2000), pp. 215-16.

[10] Harrison's inscribed parchment seems to have been a magical text, rather than a focus for sympathetic magic, in spite of the bones and hair (F3). This inscribed parchment has the cachet of durable materials and authoritative writing, as opposed to the piece of leather Temperance Lloyd confessed to pricking in *A True and impartial relation* (1682), or the single-use, disposable figures Thomas Potts describes the witches of Lancashire using in *The wonderfull discoverie of witches* (1612).

The organic and mutable membrane that separates prophecy from heterodoxy often threatens to shift and engulf the prophet. Seventeenth-century prophets worked from the premise that they were speaking at the end of days and that as God's "daughters," and "handmaids," who had received the Holy Spirit, *they* were meant to prophesy (Acts 2:17-18).[12] The OED defines prophecy as "the action, function, or faculty of a prophet; divinely inspired utterance or discourse; spec. in Christian theology, utterance flowing from the revelation and impulse of the Holy Spirit." Prophecy is, in turn, defined by its production, as a revelatory utterance which comes from the prophet; she is the reason her prophecy exists. Why then do critics like Diane Purkiss and Hilary Hinds define early English prophets as passive in their roles? In "Producing the Voice, Consuming the Body," Purkiss argues that "in authentic prophecy the voice comes from God, while the body through which it speaks is a passive conduit" (141). Hinds writes that "virtually all sectarian writing by women–whether autobiography, warning or prediction—conformed to this definition: it was glossed as the work of God"; the woman was merely the pen which wrote it (10). This study will differ from Purkiss and Hinds in reading the self-effacing (but often scrappy) humility *topos* present in early modern prophecies as part rhetorical device (to avoid charges of vainglory), and part divine authorization (to increase market value). We will follow the OED, and look first to the prophet to understand her relationship to her prophecies.

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[11] The difference between divine oracular prediction and magical divination, like that between prophecy and witchcraft, is often hard to distinguish. Numerous magic texts use the invocation of angels as part of their rituals. The fasting, prayers, and visions of John the Monk, who wrote the fourteenth-century *Liber Visionum* to bypass magic but still access its rewards, read like the stages of prophetic contemplation. In an article published in *Conjuring Spirits*, Nicholas Watson nicknames these stages "Conversion, Purgation, Illumination, and Union" (170). This magical path to inner contemplative magic follows a well-known (Roman Catholic) route. Although not contemporary to the prophets in this study, *Liber Visionum* represents an excellent example of magic used to access the divine. For more information on John the Monk and *Liber Visionum*, see Claire Fanger's *Conjuring Spirits* (1998).

[12] This is actually a later version of Joel 2:28-29: "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions."

Early modern Englishwomen's prophecies can be categorized in three basic ways: ecstatic, inspired, and oracular. The first category of prophecy represents the utterance of an ecstatic speaker; from their beds, or muted by the power of their message, Sarah Wight, Anna Trapnel, and Eleanor Channel prophesy ecstatically. The second category is the inspired, didactic message of an erudite educator. Using erudite prophecy, a form usually associated with male prophets such as John Milton, Edmund Spenser, and William Blake, women like Margaret Fell and Eleanor Davies produced educated, inspired messages and displayed their scholarly understanding of the scriptures. The final category is the divine utterance, which promises perhaps to foretell, and definitely to influence, the future. Oracular or simply inspired, this is the discursive form used by Old Testament prophets. In this tradition, Esther Biddle, Priscilla Cotton, Mary Cole, Mary Howgill, and Mary Cary emerged from the metaphorical desert, full of divine ire and zeal, to alert the sinful and lethargic world that God was not pleased. These women judged, condemned, and promised to lead the world into a new era. As helpful as these categories may be for understanding how the prophet constructed her identity, they were not set in stone, nor did they protect the prophet from more damaging constructions. The prophet was only a prophet when she was recognized as one; however, the streets of London and the pages of the tabloid mill could be very hostile places for the would-be prophetic sectarian woman. The successful ecstatic, erudite, or oracular prophet might be acclaimed as a leader, but the unsuccessful one, or the one who fell from favor, could, like her dark sister, be identified as a witch.

Prophetic Witches | Malevolent Prophets | Possession | Obsession

Witches and prophets often share more than just linguistic, corporeal, and textual similarities. A number of early modern women, like Mother Shipton, combine the attributes of prophet and witch in their ability to predict the future. Oracular prediction, be it political (like Mother Shipton's claim that Cardinal Wolsey would not make it to London with the King) or personal (like Barbara Blaugdone's assertion that one her acquaintances would confess), was one of the most obvious and troubling areas of overlap between witch and prophet for early modern scholars. The Witch of Endor (I Kings 28:7-25), a biblical character who provoked much comment from early modern theologians, does bring together witchcraft and prophecy with regard to the oracular, but not with a single, consistent interpretation.[13] In *Witchcraft in the Middle Ages* (1972), Jeffrey Burton Russell argues that magic and prophecy lived in very close proximity, if indeed they were not, in biblical terms, identical: "almost every Old Testament passage dealing with magic or 'witchcraft' is really concerned with divination. The 'witch' of Endor was really a seer, and in the biblical passage as 'thou shalt not suffer a witch to live' (Exodus 22:18), the Hebrew for 'witch' is *kasaph,* connoting a diviner rather than anything like a later witch" (18). Barbara Rosen's *Witchcraft in England* (1969) also notes that "generations of theologians" puzzled over the Witch of Endor's familiar spirit, "generally deciding that she was the type of witch who prophesied by ventriloquism or the voice of a demon within her; with the aid of this she could also conjure up evil spirits" (30). The oracular woman was read, like the prophet, as merely a spiritual conduit. However, if oracular prediction brought the prophesier and the witch in close proximity, it also brought these dark sisters into uncomfortable propinquity with the demoniac and the possessed.[14] Deconstructing the witch/prophet divide not only allows us to look into the moments of textual and corporeal sameness marking the women who might fall into either camp, but also widens the frame of reference until our critical gaze can fall onto the other women who informed spiritual subjectivity in early modern England–the demoniacs, the possessed, obsessed, the miraculous and the monstrous.

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[13] The intransigently ambiguous Witch of Endor lent herself to a variety of early modern interpretations. Richard Bernard's *Guide to Grand Jurymen* (1627) uses the witch of Endor to tie women to the oracular, and to witchcraft: "and albeit there bee men Witches, as Balaam, and Elymas; and women Witches, as the Witch of Endor; and of both these sexes, of all sorts, young, middle and old age [...] yet of Witches there be commonly more women then men: this is evident, From Gods publishing his Law against Witches, Exo. 22.18. in the feminine gender. *Praestigiatricem ne sinito viuere.*II. From Saul's speech, when he said, Seeke me out a woman that hath a Familiar spirit, 1. Sam. 28.7. 1. Chr. 10.13, 14. In naming a woman, and not a man, it seemeth that women were more addicted thereunto then men" (90). In *A Candle in the Dark* (1655), Thomas Addy argues that 'white' magic and oracular declarations are "Imposture[s that] may be paralleled with that of the Witch of Endor; from this cousening Witchcraft of the Popish crue, our common Wizards have learned their craft of cousening the people, making them beleeve they can Conjure up the Devil to give them Oracles according to the matter that they seek to the Wizard to be resolved of, and can conjure him down again at their pleasure (61). Sir Matthew Hale wrote in 1693 that the Witch of Endor was an example of how "evil angels" were involved in the "temptation of our first parents" (*A Collection of modern relations* 1).

Demoniacs, ecstatic prophets, reprobate sinners, and witches all seem to share divine and demonic attributes. They exhibit unexpected holiness or oracularity; women like Hannah Allen, Joan Drake, Joyce Dovey, Mary Glover, and Margaret Muschamp simultaneously displayed both possession and transfiguration. These women experienced a filling of the spirit, but one that defied easy interpretation. Diane Purkiss notes, in "Invasions: Prophecy and Bewitchment in the Case of Margaret Muschamp" (1998), that "just as prophets were often accused of witchcraft and possession, so possessed people often exhibited (paradoxically) spectacular holiness" (236). Obsessed religious enthusiasts and reprobate sinners both saw hellfire and damnation around them, often violently recoiling from the ecclesiastical and godly; Allen and Dovey seem to have had the same kind of intimate relationship with the Devil as witches and demoniacs claimed. Demoniacs, ecstatic prophets, reprobate sinners, and witches also have in-depth, personal, and often shocking knowledge of sin written on their bodies. Phyllis Mack argues that "prophecy and witchcraft, or prophecy and possession[15] by diabolical power, were often conflated,

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[14] The demoniac is defined as a person possessed by demons. Alternatively, the possessed could be possessed by any kind of supernatural spirit or entity. An ecstatic prophet might be possessed by the spirit of God; however, possession is often also associated with the kind of malady which results from malefic magic. An obsessed woman, like a reprobate sinner, might likewise be obsessed with her own reprobation.

[15] In *Unclean Spirits* (1981), D. P. Walker explores the tangible and fatal results of the early modern English belief in possession. Even though there is no "biblical authority whatever for supposing that possession can be caused by witchcraft," in "Elizabethan and Jacobean England at least sixteen witches died because of testimony given by demoniacs, and several more were arrested" (8-9). *In Servants of Satan* (1985), Joseph Klaits argues that the "increased incidence of episodes of demonic possession in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries seems due primarily to the heightened spiritual atmosphere of the time. Ironically, by harping on Satan's powers in their sermons and writings, religious authorities produced the result they most feared. Such vivid imagery encouraged suggestible individuals to imagine themselves in the devil's clutches" (110).

not only because the external behavior of both these types are similar but because in both cases, the woman's body and behavior frequently exhibited tangible signs (catatonia, witches marks)" (89). The oracular woman was also seen as having a familiar spirit working for her: Anne Bodenham had one conversing with her; Margaret Muschamp claimed her angels were spirits; and Mary Glover supposedly had a spirit inside her. If all oracularity is based on some kind of affiliation with, or infiltration by, spiritual agents, are all visionary women possessed? Does this move us towards seeing these dark sisters as being in some ways possessed, or at least obsessed? [16]

The possessed body[17] stands apart from her divinely inspired or malefically inclined sisters. However, if the obsessed and the demoniacs of early modern England appear to illustrate the slippery slope between vision and possession, they do not in fact offer a missing link between witches and prophets. The prophet is no more possessed by God than the witch is by the Devil. The ecstatic prophet, ecstatic reprobate, and the demoniac exhibit commonalities which group them together: they suffer their spiritual beliefs, feel them, exhibit them, and make them real for those who perceive their spiritual power. But that is not to say these women are the same. The reprobate sinner and ecstatic prophet record their battles, the witch is the Devil's soldier corrupting the world, one windstorm or sick baby at a time, and the demoniac loses herself to the Devil. The possessed and the demoniac are as close as one gets to the empty vessel filled up with erratic and often malefic spiritual power, but even these women maintain a kind of sentience which complicates easy interpretations. Katherine Hodgkin proposes that, "for contemporaries the boundaries between insanity,[18] possession, witchcraft, and divine inspiration were places of unease, potentially blurred even if only in theory" (233). They act for us in very much the same way. The possessed body does not offer us a mid-point between witch and prophet, nor does she illustrate an extremity of either kind of spiritual affiliation.

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[16] However, even here we find confusion between the victim of malefic magic who appears possessed, and the woman possessed by demons. In The Witchcraft Reader (2002), Darren Oldridge argues, "English familiar spirits were believed to enter the bodies of the witch's victims–and sometimes the witch herself–where they cause swellings and convulsions, and could manipulate their hosts like parasitic puppet-masters," making affliction operate like possession (229). However, in "Popular Culture?" (1984), Clive Holmes notes that "obsession, possession, and "the witch-possession identification might prove seductive to those whose symptoms bewildered medical experts, their families and neighbors, and most crucially themselves" (313). Possession became a way to name the unnamable. Moshe Sluhovsky attempts to distinguish between (what he labels as) two distinct phenomena, claiming that "possession is an involuntary interaction between a human being and a possessing entity" which is "resolved with a successful exorcism"; malefic possessions, however, "involved a voluntary pact with the Devil, signed by the witch, and terminated only when "the diabolic pact ended," such as when the witch died (256). In Demonic Possession and Exorcism, Philip C. Almond clarifies this argument further, stating that "when the Devil has directly entered the body of the demoniac, it is generally seen as a consequence of the sin of the latter"; the possessed are held "responsible for their own plight" (14). Conversely, the victim of malefic possession is "construed as an innocent victim" (15). Holmes asks that we remember that the "possessed themselves were not simply malleable puppets articulating the concerns of others in a process of social ventriloquism" (312). For more information on Holmes' argument, see Demonic Possession and Exorcism in Early Modern England: Contemporary Texts and their Cultural Contexts (2004). Logically, the families of demoniacs, and the demoniacs themselves, often sought a witch to blame for their inappropriate behavior.

[17] In the "Father's Seductions" (1998), Tamsin Spargo proposes that "the man or woman possessed by the divine might easily be possessed by the diabolic: the flipside of the prophet was the witch, points to the conflation of spiritual allegiance with spiritual infiltration. Although the woman who associates with the spiritual world exists in very close proximity with the woman consumed by it, they are not interchangeable" (259). Possession became a practical way for girls and women, who could not otherwise explain their sickness, visions, or even naughty behavior, to define the reason they had not been quite themselves lately: someone or something else possessed them. The possessed, like the inspired, seemed to manifest their symptoms more violently while being observed.

However, in the troubling opacities we struggle with in differentiating and connecting witch and prophet, we can perceive a reflection of the early modern desire to impose clarity where spiritual confusion lay. Although we will not likely find a clear grid onto which these women can be pinned–the messy spiritualist, the combined witch/

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[18] According to Michael MacDonald, during "the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, the English people became more concerned about the prevalence of madness, gloom, and self murder than they had ever before" (2). That "private institutions to house the insane did not begin to proliferate until the last half of the seventeenth century, municipal asylums to rival Bedlam were not founded in major cities for another century, and county lunatic hospitals were not established until after 1808" may offer us a clue as to the whereabouts of prophets and witches after the Restoration (4). Instead of having to deal with its wild and wicked women, England could begin to lock them up. Although this is a fertile area of study, there is insufficient space in this work to look at madness as it interrelates with witchcraft, prophecy, and possession. For more information on this topic, see Michael MacDonald's *Mystical Bedlam: Madness, Anxiety, and Healing in Seventeenth-Century England* (1981).

prophet–the desire to do so gets us closer to the early modern desire to sort out how all these dark women should be read.

Familiar (≅) Faerie

The alluring appearance of faeries and familiars in early English texts may not offer a link between witches and prophets, but it does help the modern reader to conceptualize *how* these women did what they did. Familiars, faeries, and spirits appear as capricious elements, offering little in the way of self-definition, and bedeviling any taxonomy with which we seek to classify them. In "Sounds of Silence," Diane Purkiss suggests that a "perceived overlap" between faeries and devils "seemed likely; fairies, being liminal, boundary walkers, could overlap with devils easily, and could also end up situated on the boundary between different discourses" (84). The categorization of fairies/ familiars, who often seemed to operate in the same way, tended to reflect the desires of the examiners, rather than the accused; confessions were often re-told multiple times until the pet turned into a familiar, or the fairy into a spirit. During her third examination, Joan Willimot claimed to have unwillingly had a spirit called Pretty blown into her mouth, a spirit, she protested, that she only used to help and heal. Nonetheless, her spirit was read as a familiar (E3v). Margaret Muschamp's claims of communion with spirits, on the other hand, were construed as conversations with angels. Finally, although Ann Jeffries' fairies[19] stayed fairies throughout her examination, Jefferies herself changed as she spoke, becoming a kind of cunning woman, prophet and local celebrity, who healed the injured and made political prophecies.

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[19] For Joan Willimot, see *The Wonderful Discoverie of the Witchcrafts of Margaret and Phillip Flower, Daughters of Joan Flower neere Bever castle* (1619), pp. D4-F; for Margaret Muschamp, see Mary Moore's *Wonderful News From the North* (1650), pp. 1, 6, 8, 9, 12, 18, 20; and for Anne Jefferies, see Moses Pitt's *An Account of one Anne Jefferies* (1696), and Robert Hunt's *Popular Romances* (1881), p. 317.

Claude Lecouteaux argues that a variety of spiritual entities, like the familiar and fairy (beings he terms traveling souls, spirits, doubles, or alter egos), can act in the role of second selves (26). The function of familiars, fairies, spirits, and angels as extensions of the witch and prophet helps us see how these women accessed the spiritual realm and became spiritually significant, powerful public figures. The double who appears in dreams, visions, and visitations is the spiritual second self–the woman's prophetic self (the one she sees in visions), and the woman's malefic self (the one who brings misfortune on her enemies). Women might also see their doubles as morphing animal forms, or fantastic humanoid creatures (147). Transmogrifying extensions of identity are embodied in this study by the familiar and the faerie.

Frances E. Dolan proposes that "the witch's familiar, a demonic domestic pet who serves as companion and agent of mischief," is a "useful model for [a] pervasive conflation of dangerous and familiar" (5). The familiar/faerie corporealized the witch and prophet's recognizable, but ultimately unknowable, power. Dolan's suggestion that the "permeable boundaries around the subject in early modern England extended to include objects (property, bodily products and parts) that might be considered subject-extensions" moves towards considering how witches were able to remain separate, while invading the homes and bodies of their victims through their familiars (183). Dolan argues the witch is "a consequence of the unfixed boundary between self and other" which cannot be precisely located (184). The subject, Dolan argues, "extended to encompass outgrowths exceeding the skin: hair, nails, urine, feces" (194); in the same way, the witch extended herself through her familiar. The faerie and familiar were a part of, and apart from, the visionary and the witch; active and empowered second selves had access to amorphous spiritual energy that the women themselves did not. The familiar provided accusers with a way to assign culpability to the witch for a crime she was nowhere near, and gave women a way to articulate that they were not capable of powering prophecy or *maleficium* themselves, by pointing to their spiritual second selves as the active agents.

Processing vs. Understanding

The witch and prophet understood the difference between being magic and understanding magic. If the faerie and familiar can be used to demonstrate how the witch and prophet were believed to operate, the difference between processing and comprehending can be used to illustrate why the witch and prophet operated as they did. In his 2004 book, *Mind,* John R. Searle revisits concepts of computer functionalism (what he calls "strong AI"), and argues that computers, no matter how complex, simply process information, rather than comprehending it.[20] Searle's assertion, which has received its share of critical attention, can also be used to explain how malefic language and prophecy functioned for witches and prophets. When witches want to shirk responsibility for their speech, they insist that they were merely reiterating words without comprehension; these women claim to be part of a system of hardware which processed magic, without ever really comprehending it. Even in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, women were keenly aware that blindly participating in a system was profoundly different from speaking with full perlocutionary intent. Conversely, when the prophet speaks, she does not simply reiterate or process words which pass through her mind and mouth in tandem; she comprehends and translates the data. The prophet consciously receives, actively mediates, critically edits, and authoritatively lends her body and name to the prophecy. She then publishes her prophecy as a divinely inspired teacher, using God's authority to validate her own text. Simultaneously inflecting all parts of the text, she speaks for God. Whether she was an itinerant preacher, spreading the word of God at home or abroad, or a local woman prophesying from her chamber or praying in the streets, even the most passive prophet was an active, cogent voice for God. In order to understand who these witches and prophets were, one needs to know not only what they did, but how they came to play a part in early modern England

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[20] Searle first considered his "Chinese Room" thought experiment in 1980. He argued that a person stuck in a room with "boxes full of Chinese symbols" and "a rule book," would "in effect [operate like] a computer program" and be able to "answer questions put to [her/him] in Chinese" (90). Although the person in the room might be able to "manipulate [the symbols] according to the rules in the program, and hand out the required symbols, which are interpreted as answers," thereby passing the Turing test for understanding, she/he could do so without understanding a word of Chinese. This is the difference between processing and comprehending. Tools cannot comprehend data; they can only process it.

"There be dragons": Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Contexts

The dark threat of witches preceded and slouched alongside the growth of radical religious sects and a burgeoning prophetic movement. In order to understand how the witch and the prophet were linguistically and corporeally aligned in seventeenth-century England, it is crucial to know about the English witch-hunts. The criminalization of witchcraft created the legal impetus to find, persecute, and prosecute women as witches. The 1563 Witchcraft Act appears to be a plausible legal origin for the persecution of English witches.[21] Before that, the Act of 1542, made law under Henry and repealed under Edward, made it a felony to "conjure spirits, or to practice witchcraft, enchantment or sorcery" in order to find treasure, injure goods or people, force love, or for any other "unlawful intent or purpose" (Thomas 442). However, in *Instruments of Darkness,* James Sharpe points out that, prior to 1550, there were no organized witch-hunts in England. Although there are numerous theories attributing English and Continental witch-hunts to various economic and sociological factors, it was the 1563 Act that made witchcraft a legal felony for the first time in England, and provided the force behind the explosion of English witchcraft cases (Sharpe 16). The Act "made the causing of another's death and the conjuration of spirits . . . a crime punishable by death" (Durston 177). Lesser "forms of witchcraft, such as injuring people, or their property, using magic to find treasure etc. could result in a year's imprisonment, and being pilloried for the first offence, with death for the second one"

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[21] An anti-witchcraft statute was proposed in 1559, but failed. See Durston (2000), p. 24.

(*ibid.*). By 1581, it had become illegal to prophesy the Queen's death,[22] an amendment that Durston argues was created by "the dynastic uncertainties of an aging, unmarried and childless Queen" (178). Ironically, even after this amendment to the 1563 Act, startlingly few witchcraft cases were tried solely on the grounds of fortune-telling.

In the Act of 1604, James I of England[23] expanded the definition of witchcraft to include more specific crimes, and a more European understanding of *maleficium;* causing personal injury, the conjuration of spirits, and the use of corpses in magic became capital offenses.[24] This new Act also "divided the crime," creating first-degree and second-degree witchcraft. Durston notes that "first degree witchcraft included the conjuration of an evil spirit, charm or sorcery. Second degree witchcraft . . . made offering to find buried treasure or stolen goods, and providing potions or charms that might 'provoke any person to unlawful love' an offence" (179). Keith Thomas argues that it was with the 1604 Act that "the full continental doctrine [took] place," an influence fully palpable in the fact that the new Act legislated against necromancy, and made it illegal to "consult, covenant with, entertain, employ, feed, or reward any evil and wicked spirit to or for any intent or purpose" (443).[25] Although the women accused of witchcraft spoke of their familiars as having much more ambiguous moral alliances, the law categorized these second selves as either good or evil. By the end of their multiple trips to the examination room, witches were often persuaded to align their familiars with the latter.

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[22] *The Act against seditious words and rumours uttered against the Queen's most excellent Majesty* (1580-1. 23 Eliz., c. 2.) made it law:

> That if any person or persons . . . shall by setting or erecting of any figure or figures, or by casting of nativities, or by calculation, or by any prophesying, witchcraft, conjurations, or other like unlawfull means whatsoever, seek to know, and shall set forth by express words, deeds, or writings, how long her Majesty shall live or continue, or who shall reign as King or Queen of this realm of England after her Highness' decease, or else shall advisedly and with a malicious intent against her Highness, utter any manner of direct prophecies to any such intent or purpose, or shall maliciously by any words, writing, or printing, wish, will, or desire the death or deprivation of our sovereign lady the Queen's Majesty (that now is) or any thing directly to the same effect, That then every such offence shall be felony, and every offender and offenders therein, and also all his or their aiders procurers and abettors in or to the said offences, shall be judged as felons and shall suffer pains of death and [forfeit] as in case of felony is used, without any benefit of clergy or sanctuary. (qtd. Rosen 57)

[23] Stuart Clark proposes that "the actual rate of prosecutions after 1603, at least in strongly affected counties of the Home Circuit, was shown to have dropped from the Elizabethan level," and that "the point at issue after 1604 was simply that witches had the power to do harm" ("Witchcraft" 161). Clark goes on to conclude that James' impact was much less than expected; in the end, there is little to suggest he had any interest in propagating witchcraft beliefs in England at all" (*ibid.*)

[24] From *An Act Against Conjuration witchcraft and dealing with evil and wicked spirits* (1604. 1 Jac. I, c. 12.):

> That if any person or persons, after the said Feast of St. Michael the Archangel next coming, shall use practise or exercise any invocation or conjuration of any evil and wicked spirit, or shall consult covenant with, entertain, employ, feed, or reward any evil and wicked spirit to or for any intent or purpose; or take up any dead man, woman, or child our of his, her, or their grave, or any other place where the dead body resteth or the skin, bone, or any part of any dead person, to be employed or used in any manner of witchcraft, sorcery, charm, or enchantment; or shall use, practise, or exercise any witchcraft, enchantment, charm, or sorcery, whereby any person shall be killed, destroyed, wasted, consumed, pined, or lamed in his or her body, or any part thereof; that then every such offender or offenders, their aiders, abetters and counselors, being of any the said offences duly and lawfully convicted and attainted, shall suffer pains of death as a felon or felons, and shall lose the privilege and benefit of clergy and sanctuary. (57-8)

By the seventeenth century, witchcraft had moved entirely from being a community problem, to a judicial issue of intense interest to the State.[26] Cases which would normally have been resolved at a village level could now escalate into full-blown legal indictments, trials, and executions. The number of witches legally executed in England was, according to L'Estrange Ewen, likely somewhat less than 1000 (112).[27] In what he called an "incomplete search," Keith Thomas claims he was able to add "over 120 witch trials and 22 executions" to Ewen's numbers, but is "unable to improve on his overall estimate" (fn3, 450). According to Gregory Durston, England experienced the least spectacular of the European witch hunts. Durston claims that "during the 200 years in which witchcraft was prosecuted as a felony, between 350 and 1000 judicial deaths took place"; however, he feels that 500 judicial deaths is a more likely figure (7).[28] As a disproportionate number of England's witchcraft indictments and trials came from Essex and, to a lesser extent, Lancashire and Kent, "about 90 per cent of villages would not have produced a single hanged witch and many not a single formal allegation of witchcraft" (7). On the Home Circuit, according to Thomas, there were probably "more trials under Elizabeth than during the whole subsequent century" (451). On the Western Circuit, however, "trials continued at a high rate during the reign of Charles II" (*ibid.*).

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[25] Thomas goes on to claim that "in this latter clause the influence of the continental doctrine of the diabolical compact was unambiguous, though, by specifically banning evil spirits, the Act still left a loophole for those magicians who believed that the spirits with which they dealt were good ones" (443). The magician, it seems, had privileges that the witch did not.

[26] By the time James VI became James I of England, he was avidly interested in using scientific principles to prove or disprove witchcraft charges. He wrote *Dæmonologie (1597)* in Scotland and was actively involved in witchcraft trials there. See *Malcome Gaskill's Witchfinders: A Seventeenth-Century English Tragedy* (2005), pp. 27-31, 105.

[27] For more information on how Ewen reached his numbers, see *Witchhunting and Witch Trials* (1971), pp. ix-xii, and 111-13.

Despite England's relatively small witch-craze, there were two curious spikes in its witchcraft persecutions: the first, as previously mentioned, in the mid-sixteenth-century, and the second in the mid-seventeenth. The most infamous increase in witch-hunting numbers occurred between 1640 and 1660, after a long lull, and is largely attributable to Matthew Hopkins, the self-styled Witch Finder General. This singular craze, brought about by "Hopkins and his associates resulted in the execution of several hundred witches in Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk and neighboring counties" (*ibid.*). The concurrent timing of the English witch-hunts and the sectarian prophetic movement points to an intriguing field of investigation. English eyes turned in unprecedented numbers to women offering both salvation and damnation; which camp women were aligned with seemed to have had as much to do with their place within their communities as it did with their own spiritual politics.

Did the English Civil War resurrect the witch as it gave birth to the female prophet? Did the prophet take over for the witch, whose popularity had begun to wane? Or is their historical relationship more complicated? Diane Purkiss argues that the "figure of the witch was constantly caught up in and reshaped by the swirling, ceaselessly changing discourses of the politics and persons of the Civil War era" ("Desire" 106). The Civil War, which gave rise to the prophet, also produced tensions that witchcraft accusations could relieve; accusations of witchcraft became a favored way to demonize the enemy and justify military losses. With Satan on their side, the king's army had an unfair advantage; however, with God on theirs, the parliamentary forces would surely prevail. Since the witch had never entirely left the public consciousness, the Civil War provided a charged and anxious atmosphere in which to start looking for her again. However, because witchcraft persecutions had, with the main exception of the Hopkins episode, declined by the 1640s, this study often looks at witches persecuted decades before the prophets it likewise studies.

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[28] Durston estimates that, in Europe as a whole, and accounting for "allowances for failures in recording through lost documentation," as well as those who died inside prison and by illegal means, "the number of executions for witchcraft was between 40,000 and 50,000 people (of whom 75 percent were women)" (6). James Sharpe writes that, globally, "40,000 people were executed as witches in the period of the witch persecutions, between about 1450 and 1750" (6).

The Writer, the Witch, and the Debate

The creation of the Gutenberg press enabled the production of cheap pamphlets, creating a public space for scholars and would-be scholars to debate both the plausibility and the details of witchcraft beliefs. The publication of witchcraft tracts created witches by creating controversy about them–from this boiling cauldron, the theoretical witch gave rise to the real one.[29] Johann Weyer believed in the Devil, but not the witch; he saw the women accused of witchcraft as sick, crazy, deceived (or all three), and in need of religious training—they were not the Devil's earthly agents. According to Wolfgang Behringer, Johann Weyer's *De Praestigiis Daemonum* (1563) signified a paradigm shift towards the opinions of opponents of witchcraft persecution; the text was not 'an isolated event,' but a successful strategy of defense put forward exactly when a new strategy was required" (Behringer 89-90). Clark argues similarly that Weyer's *De Praestigiis Daemonum* was "conventionally regarded as a landmark emergence in full-scale doubt" (*Thinking* 198).[30] According to Weyer, witches were those who "by reason of their sex and uncertain in faith, and by their age not sufficiently settled in their minds, are much more subject to the Devil's deceits, who, insinuating himself into their imagination, whether waking or sleeping, introduces all sorts of shapes, cleverly stirring up the humours and the spirits in this trickery" (qtd. Clark *Languages* 198). Weyer's witch was a powerless victim, deceived by the Devil, rather than a powerful Circe. Although his witch is not a malevolent agent, her age, foolishness, and unstable faith make her into the stereotype that Scot later attempted to deconstruct.

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[29] Although their influence in England is debatable, P.G. Maxwell-Stuart argues that Henirch Kramer's *Malleus Maleficarum* (1486), and Ulrich Molitor's *De Lamiis et Pythonicis* (1489) were two early, influential tracts in creating ideas about who witches were and how they functioned (28-41).

According to Sydney Anglo, Reginald Scot was "greatly impressed by Weyer" (112).[31] However close Scot's work may have been to Weyer's, Scot nonetheless located himself outside demonological tradition and within "demonological skepticism" (Clark "Languages" 13). Scot believed that the power attributed to witches was "incomprehensible to the wise, learned or faithful; a probable matter to children, fooles, melancholic persons and papists" (Scot 389).[32] Moreover, Scot himself parodied the charity-refused model[33] as a genesis of witchcraft accusations. Scot saw no magic in the ways in which alleged *maleficium* occurred, and, as Gibson notes, "in Scot's terms, if the stories are not true in one respect (no magic happened), then why should they be true in other, supposedly more verifiable ways?" ("Accusers'" 46). Scot articulates the frustration contemporary scholars have with witch-hunting; however, his insights did not impress his own contemporaries.

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[30] Robin Briggs argues that Weyer's "defective logic and confusing presentation left him open to all kinds of attacks" (262). Although Weyer discredited much of what he saw as cruelty within witch-hunting, according to Linda C. Hults, in *The Witch as Muse: Art, Gender, and Power in Early Modern Europe* (2005), his "fundamental conservatism" kept him well within the demonological tradition, and thus open to censure (156).

[31] Anglo goes on to argue that Weyer was the "first to perceive how biblical evidence might be subverted by challenging the interpretation of the actual words employed in the Greek, Hebrew and Latin texts" (112). In his "serious and sustained argument" against the "distorted" legal process of finding witches guilty, Scot's challenge to the "translation of the words *chasaph* and *ob* as witch and possession" owes its foundations to Weyer's work (114 -118). For more on Anglo, see *The Damned Art: Essays in the Literature of Witchcraft* (1977).

[32] Scot's extensive list of the skills attributed to witches draws on authors James Sprenger and Henry Institor, and further confirms its authoritativeness by reference to Johannes Nider (*Formicarius* (1437)), Italian Inquisitor Cumanus (who burned 41 Italian witches in 1485), Lambert Danaeus (*A Dialogue of Witches* (1575)), Andreas Hyperius (*Two common places taken out of Andreas Hyperius* (1581)), Heronymus Hemingius, Jean Bodin (*De La Demonomanie des Sorciers*), and Bartholomäus Spineus (*Novus malleus maleficarum sub quaestione de strigibus seu maleficis* (1581)). Scot notes that these scholars credit witches with being able to create bad weather and kill with it, make men impotent or barren, make women miscarry or fail to conceive, throw children in the water, make

In 1587, George Gifford took Scot's treatise one step further. He believed that there were witches, but they were not as powerful or as numerous as previously assumed. Likewise, any power the witch had was given to her by Satan; she did not have any inherent power of her own. Gifford defined a witch as:

> one that woorketh by the Devill, or by some develish or curious art, either hurting or healing, revealing thinges secrete, or foretelling thinges to come, which the devil hath devised to entangle and snare mens soules withal unto damnation. The conjurer, the enchaunter, the sorcerer, the deviner, and whatsoever other sort there is, are in deede compassed within this circle. (B2)

Alan Macfarlane argues that, although most of Gifford's "congregation and neighbors believed [that] witches were to blame for a large portion of the pain and misfortune in the environment," Gifford himself proposed that God "permitted the Devil to act; and the Devil, while pretending to be the witch's slave, was really her master" ("Tudor" 146, 148). Although theologically sound, this explanation did not give those in pain and grief "a chance of healing present pain and minimizing the recurrence of misfortune in the future"; it took away their effigies, and left only God to blame for suffering (149). Within

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horses throw their riders, turn themselves invisible, take away judicial power, "manifest unto others, things hidden and lost, and foreshew things to come; and see them as though they were present, and kill human and animal with a look" (7). Scot finally shows his cards when he argues that witches can also stop butter from churning, "especially, if either the maids have eaten up the creame; or the good-wife have sold the butter before in the market" (9). If witches could do all the things that scholars attribute to them, he suggests, the world would not produce a single newborn baby, or a single pound of butter; in listing all the varied, often ridiculous, and all-encompassing alleged skills of witches, one after another, Scot reduces the whole list to absurdity.

[33] Based on the work of Keith Thomas in *Religion and The Decline of Magic* (1971) and Alan Mcfarlane in *Witchcraft in Tudor and Stuart England* (1970), the charity-refused model looks to locate the genesis of *maleficium* at or in a moment when the alleged victim or family of the alleged victim refused to give charity to the alleged witch or her/his family. This trope rested on the stereotyping of witches as poor, old, indigent, and vengeful beggars. See Thomas, pp. 519-34 and Macfarlane, pp. 110-13.

Gifford's theory we see that witches and, by extension, prophets ultimately exist through God's permission; their successes, positive and negative, fall squarely on his shoulders.

In *Dæmonologie* (1597), James VI of Scotland promoted the belief that female witches were the Devil's students and servants; the Devil gave witches image magic, medicinal magic, and poisons with which to harm their enemies. It is hard to know how much influence any of the texts debating the role of witchcraft had on those who accused women and those who tried them. Likewise, the influence of *Dæmonologie,* although it was reprinted after James' English coronation, cannot be surmised; he himself let it fade after investigating a fraudulent witchcraft charge in 1611. James later became very involved in debunking possession cases attributed to malefic witchcraft, and recanted much of what he had written earlier. Malcome Gaskill sums up James' diminished interest by stating simply that, "by the time *Dæmonologie* was republished in 1616, James had more interest in deer-hunting than he ever had in witch hunting" (31). Although some critics believe that he learned the error of his ways through his close participation in many trials, other critics, including Paul Jenkins, believe that James' political life had more to do with his attitude change. Jenkins believes that James had to tone down his extremist stance on witchcraft, which, although appropriate in the more superstitious landscape of Scotland, was less popular in England.

At a much later date, Joseph Glanville wrote *Saducismus triumphatus* (1682) to prove the existence of witches and their real power.[34] The text's popularity, in a period when English witchcraft executions had dwindled to almost nothing,[35] speaks to the shift in witchcraft tensions from England to North America. Glanville and his ghostwriter

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[34] He proposed to do so in two parts: "The First treating of their Possibility; The Second of their Real Existence" (1v). The publisher notes that the author, who was much distracted when writing the volume, died before it was finished; a friend compiled, ordered, and amended it. Its broad range of tabloid accounts of English witch trials was more anecdotal than philosophical, and its breezy writing style made it popular enough to go through at least three printings. Quotes from Joseph Glanville's *Saducismus triumphatus* are culled from the 1688 version of the text.

[35] Alice Molland (d. 1684) was the last woman legally executed in England as a witch. See Keith Thomas (1971), p. 452.

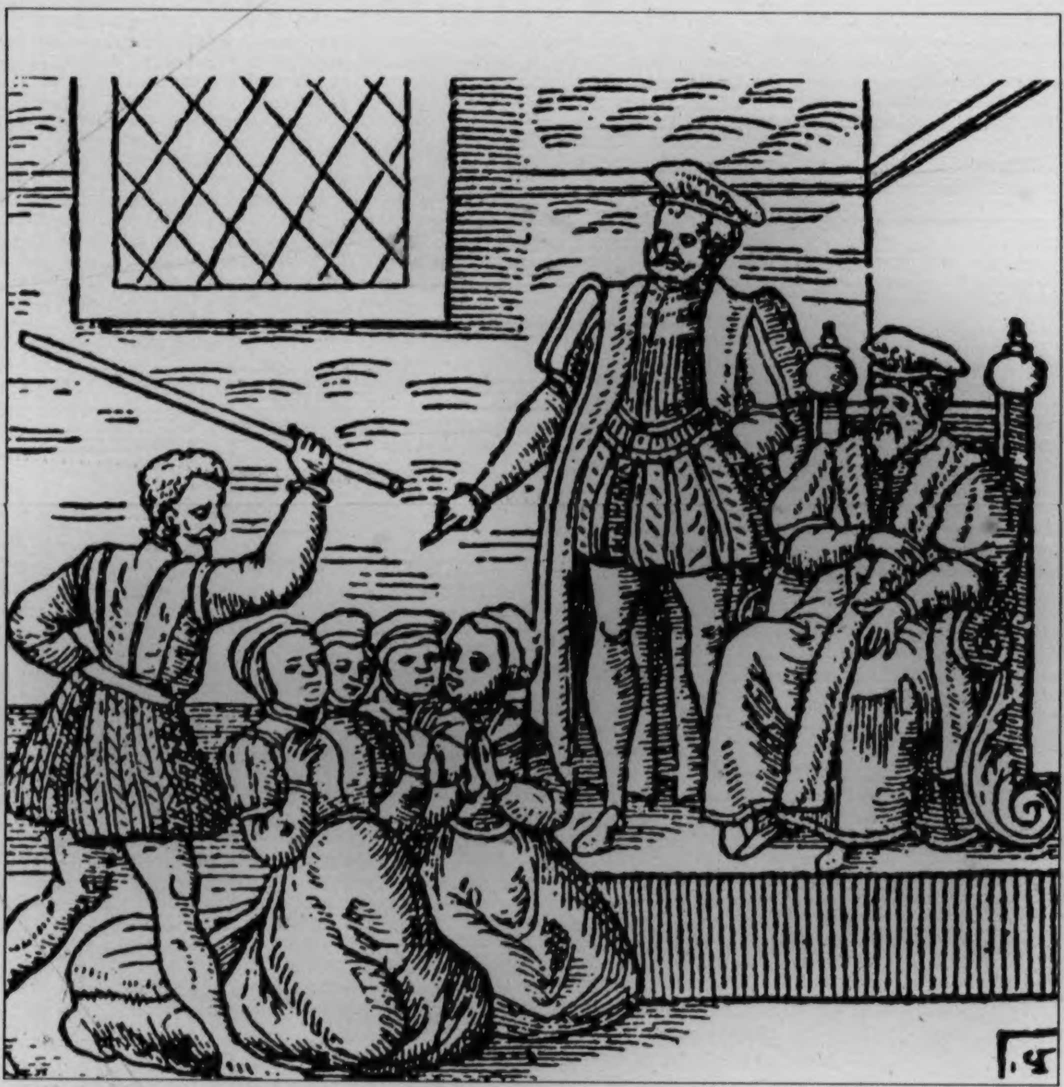

Figure 1: King James VI of Scotland interrogates witches from the town of Trenton, possibly meant to represent Gellis Duncane, Agnes Sampson (of Paddignton), Agnes Tompson (of Edenbrough), and Dr. Fian from Newes From Scotland *(1591). The image is orginially meant to represent Elizabeth Stile, Mother Dutton, Mother Devell and Mother Margaret before the author and Mayor Richard Readforth from Richard Galis'* A Brief Treatise *(1579).*

may have missed the peak of witchcraft persecutions with the publication of *Saducismus triumphatus*, but the public remained intensely interested in the women who had once spoken in their midst. Robin Briggs argues that "there is no clear link between those writers who advocated sweeping campaigns to eradicate witches and the messy reality of what were largely small-scale local persecutions" ("Strength" 262); the real-time influence of Glanville, or any of the above authors, is difficult to prove. However, the enduring contemporary interest in witchcraft texts does point to a critical interest in debating the reality of witches, which essentially propagated these women by stimulating interest in them. As more texts were published about witchcraft, more scholars wrote in response. As greater critical interest developed, judges and witch hunters had an increasing arsenal of broadly written guidelines outlining both what witches could do, and why they should be punished. Ultimately, more women were discovered to be witches once witches were written about. As the witch and prophet created reality with their words, so did their critics.

Becoming the Prophet

The English Civil War, the rise of sectarianism, the oppression practiced by both monarchist and parliamentary regimes, and the unthinkable reality of regicide created an emotionally, politically, and religiously charged atmosphere in seventeenth-century England. Therein, Millenarians prophesied King Jesus' arrival; Quakers preached that everyone already had intimate access to the divine through the inner light; and the Calvinist concept of predestination spread zeal through fear. The seventeenth-century English landscape saw a river of walking, preaching, and writing women spring forth from numerous religious sects, including Baptists, Fifth Monarchists, Levellers, Puritans, and Quakers. Where did these women come from? As I have suggested, the decline of witchcraft seems to have left a vacuum for the prophet to fill; the contemporary need for proof of the miraculous, with the exception of the spike predominately caused by Matthew

Hopkins, was occupied by the prophet after witch-hunting had fallen out of favour under James I. Women could become prophets in the middle of the seventeenth-century because their peers were willing to believe in them; but where then did the impulse to take up the chain of that particular office come from?

The ground had already been broken for the emergence of prophetic women on at least two fronts: the witch had made the walking, talking, corporeal embodiment of spiritual energy a possibility, and the End of Days signified by the Civil War and the Regicide meant that the good girls, the prophets, were not only allowed to speak, but were called to speak. In *Unbridled Spirits* (1998), Stevie Davies traces a few possible political sources for the genesis of unruly sectarian women. Davies notes that cross-dressing women in Elizabethan and Jacobean England, although rare, may have proved enticing examples of rule-breaking for the women to come (12-13).[36] In addition to these more obvious examples of gender-bending, "a number of early seventeenth-century women were already preaching and prophesying," providing tinder for the upcoming explosion (16). Chronologically closer to these sectarian women, Charles ruled from 1629-1640 without a Parliament, and, by 1641, following the end of the Long Parliament, "with the freeing of institutions came a freeing up of the mind . . . [and] riots, mass demonstrations, and petitions became staple in London" (19). Women participated *en masse* in these protests, becoming more politicized; with a quarter of the population at war, women may have also have been less motivated to show obedience to their missing husbands. Once churches began to splinter, women found something in the burgeoning sects that they had not found in the established church – a voice. According to B. S. Capp, far more women than men joined and participated in the newly formed sects (9). Although, as Susannah B. Mintz argues, sectarian communities like the Fifth Monarchists may have provided the basic element which allowed women to speak (a willingness to turn the world upside down to usher in the reign of King Jesus),[37] they were not interested in changing the world of women, and the status of women within the home remained relatively consistent (3-4). However, because the End of Days would be trumpeted in by prophets, both male and female, women could occupy a discursive space which, by divine right, was theirs. The events leading up to the Civil War and the Interregnum might have been a training ground for passionate women interested in public and political speech; however, the language they had had permission to use for generations was supposed to be both private and religious.

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[36] Two famous tracts mark the social tension of gender-bending women: *Hic Mulier: Or, The Man-Woman* (1620), and a retort, *Haec-Vir: Or the Womanish Man* (1620). For more information on the debate, see: Rachel Trubowitz's "Crossed-Dressed Women and Natural Mothers: 'Boundary Panic' in Hic Mulier" (2002), pp. 185-206; Barbara Rose's "Cross-Dressed Women in the Reign of 'Queen James': Hic Mulier, Haec Vir, and Muld Sacke" (1995), pp. 63-78; Valerie R. Lucas' "Hic Mulier: The Female Transvestite in Early Modern England" (1988), pp. 65-84; Sandra Clarke's "Hic Mulier, Haec Vir, and the Controversy over Masculine Women" (1985), pp. 157-183; and Barbara J. Baine's *Three Pamphlets on the Jacobean Antifeminist Controversy* (1978).

The Writer, the Prophet, and the Debate

Before laws were created to suppress the liberated speech that sprang up during the Civil War and the Interregnum, numerous seventeenth-century tracts scolded women for having the nerviness to appear in print at all. Social mores long suppressed the speech of women by barring most of them from the new print culture. Women who wrote were believed to put their ideas out like prostitutes put out their bodies, for public display. Joseph Swetnam's misogynistic attack on public women, *The Araignment of Lewde, idle, forward, and unconstant women* (1615, 1660), did not go unanswered: Rachel Speght's *A Muzzle for Melastomus* (1617) is a spirited, well-argued response to Swetnam's black-mouthed lies, one Hilary Hinds notes "reinterprets" the "consequent responsibilities of men rather than the necessary obedience of women" (27). However, like the Quakers who came together despite the Conventicle Act, sixteenth- and seventeenth-century women (usually those who could either afford to self publish or those elite enough to seek patronage) entered the public literary sphere. Literary foremothers like Mary Sidney, Amelia Lanyer, and Elizabeth Cary were prolific writers who extended the definition of what was considered acceptable female behavior by writing at all. However, they worked within established literary conventions of privately circulated closet dramas, poetry, translation, and scriptural interpretation.

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[37] Capps argues that "the 'essence' of the Fifth Monarchist theology was 'a declared readiness to destroy the kingdoms of the world, to invert social order, and to thereafter be rulers of the world'; they also 'rejected the validity of existing distinctions by birth' (131) and 'attacked the status of gentry and aristocracy as a whole' (144)" (qtd. Mintz 3).

Seventeenth-century female sectarian writers followed in the footsteps of these gutsy women, who created a literary matrix capable of nourishing another generation. However, although women were able to speak, they were still not supposed to preach. Paul's prohibition against women speaking in church (I Cor. 14:34-5) still carried significant weight in early modern England. However, the lack of censorship and the religiously charged atmosphere of the Civil War and Interregnum allowed certain textual and rhetorical freedoms for scriptural interpretation. Here, at this unique moment in history, at the point where the brash political woman met her devout closeted sister, the sectarian women could rise. As part of a sectarian movement or as independent figures, women of the middle ranks embraced their linguistic potential with strength, fervor, and dedication. Prophetic women became God's very public messengers.

In *Literature and Revolution in England,* Nigel Smith argues that the lax censorship that allowed prophets to publish allowed their critics the same opportunities. In the same way that the creation of cheap print allowed the witch to go public, the lack of censorship during the Civil War and Interregnum allowed women an opportunity to publicly and textually declare themselves prophets. If the period made the woman, the woman helped define the period; according to Megan Matchinske, "millennial writing proved astonishingly flexible in validating, if not specifically motivating, revolution" (351). Although the female prophets of the "1640s were ridiculed as 'tub-preachers,'" more women published during this period than ever had before (Mack 56). Lois G. Schwoerer, counts "one hundred and twelve pamphlets by women [which] appeared during the Civil War decade, compared to only forty-two tracts during the proceeding *forty* years" (60-1). Moreover, "from 1640 to 1700 there were approximately 700 tracts by women out of a total of approximately 53,350 tracts, about 1.2 percent" (61). Although Schwoerer is uncertain of the "exact number of political and religious tracts by women," she ventures an estimate of "300 written by about 30 women" (*ibid.*). Although their published numbers were disappointingly small, women made themselves a discursive and social issue in early modern England. These female prophets met scorn, curiosity, and welcome, and blatantly challenged contemporary norms that dictated their obedience, silence, and chastity. As with their dark sisters, the more women who spoke, who wrote, the more they made the proximity of prophecy seem real to their peers; in turn, more women prophesied. Although this foray into public discourse afforded women more linguistic and textual power, editors, lawyers, or clergy-men like Henry Jessey, Arise Evans, and Cotton Mather exploited and appropriated these women's words for political, religious, or legal purposes. Rhetoric which was arguably appropriate before the regicide and the Interregnum could also be deemed inappropriate, seditious, treacherous, heretical, or even demonic by critics.

If sectarian tracts empowered women to pound their fists, the middle of the century also produced a plethora of tracts that tried to push their hands back into the washing tub. According to Smith, "Thomas Edwards' *Gangraena* and other similar works, used reports, (notably private newsletters) of sectarian gatherings and personalities) to present a hostile image" (42). Ephraim Pagitt's ill-tempered, but comprehensive *Heresiography* (1654) claims to be drawing attention to a problem which the selective blindness of the powers that be in London was ignoring. Kathryn Gucer argues that "writers had been attacking the sects generally--Anabaptists, Seekers, Brownists, Familists--in brief pamphlets like Winstanley's Vindication and in tome-like catalogs of sectarian "errours" since the outbreak of the Civil War" (75).[38] Pagitt's "anti-Ranter pamphlets were thus an incursion into an ongoing printed dialogue about the sects in general"; comprehensive, but not new news (*ibid.*). In *Gangraena and the Struggle for the English Revolution* (2004) Anne Hughes argues that polemicists and writers of heresiography produced texts "full of salacious stories because the authors were convinced of the links between erroneous doctrine and immoral life" (89). Edwards' text was, in his own words, a "Catalogue or Black Bill of the Errours, Heresies, Blasphemies, and Practices of the Sectaries of this time, broached and acted within these four last years in England" (A2). Perhaps most famously, in *Gangraena* Edwards linked the prominent Baptist preacher Mrs. Attaway with John Milton's *Doctrine of Divorce* (1643); her bad behaviour was, in Edwards' mind, proof enough to besmirch the Baptists and Milton. John Graunt's *Truth's Victory* (1645) and Robert Squire's *Arraignment and Condemnation* (1645) were also concerned, like Edwards, with presenting the sectarian teachings as heresy. Hughes notes that although preachers like Richard Vines, *Impostures of Seducing Teacher Discovered* (1644), were more cautious in their denunciation of Sects, most of the "polemicists of the 1640s," like William Prynne, *The sword of Christian magistracy supported* (1647), "tended to spurn subtle distinctions" between heresy and error, "in order to justify their own intemperateness" (93). Critics were not only against sects; the presumption against women preaching, or participating in politics at all, also made it into the debate. In a highly abbreviated scan, Schwoerer lists Henry Neville's *The Parliament of Ladies* (1647), *Now or Never: Or a New Parliament of Women, Assembled* (1656), *A List of the Parliament of Women* (1679), *Great News from a Parliament of Women Now Sitting in Rosemary Lane* (1689), and a *Letter to a Gentlewomen Concerning Government* (1697) as among the tracts singularly dedicated to silencing women (60).

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[38] Besides the papists, Paggit warns the administration of London, that it is plagued by "Familists who blasphemously pretend to be Godified like God," the "illuminated Anabaptists who blasphemously affirme the baptisme of children to be the marke of the Beast," the "Donatisticall Brownists, who in times past hid themselves in holes; now lift up their heads, and vent openly their errors, infecting our people, the "Antinomians, who teach as I find, such a faire and easie way to heaven, viz. That a man need not be troubled by the law before faith, and that faith is not a going out of himselfe to take hold of Christ, but onely a discerning that Christ is his," the "Independents trouble also our poore Church, who pretend that they have a perfect modell of Church government, which Almighty God hath revealed to them, which many like better then the government of the Reformed Churches, being perswaded that in Independency they may have liberty to doe what they list, having no government, hoging to be as free as their Teachers, who will have none at all," the "Arminians also an after-brood of the Pellagiant, broach their erroneous opinions, the "Sabbatarians affirm the old Jewish Sabbath to be kept, and not the Lords day," the "Anti-sabbatarians would have no perticular Sabbath at all, but every day to bee a sabbath to a Christian man, the "Traskites, who would have us observe many Jewish ceremonies," as well as " Millenaries who affirm that before the day of judgment Christ shal come down from heaven, and reign with the Saints upon earth 1000. years, in which time they shall destroy all the wicked, binding their Kings in chaines, and Nobles in linkes of iron," "Hetheringtonians, who hold a hodg-podg of many heresies, troubling our peoples brains," the Socinians, who teach that Christ dyed not to satisfie for our sins: and also his Incasnation to be repugnant to reason, & not to be sufficiently proved by Scrip[...]ture, with many other abhominable errors," the "Arians, who deny the Deity of Christ," an "Atheistical Sect, who affirme that mens soules sleep with their bodies untill the day of Judgement," and finally "Atheists too many" (B2-B3v). This encyclopedic list of heretical sects is followed by the exasperated declaration that "Yea, since the suspention of our Church-government, every one that listeth turneth Preacher, as Shoo-makers, Coblers, Button-makers, Hostlers and such like, take upon them to expound the holy Scriptures, intrude into our Pulpits, and vent strange doctrine, tending to faction, sedition, and blasphemie" (B3v). Once *hoi polloi* can preach, the world has indeed been turned upside down.

However, sectarian women, like their foremothers, not only defended their right to speak, they also defended their right to preach. Leveler Katherine Chidley's *The Justification of the Independent Churches of Christ* (1641) was a vigorous response to Edwards' text, *Reasons against the independent government of particular congregations* (1641). Anna Trapnel's *Cry of a Stone* (1654) begins by trying to preemptively silence critics, acknowledging the flaws of works attributed to her, and providing an authorized and witnessed version of this text. However, not all women who ventured into the publishing sector did so as authors, or in response to specific criticisms; some women entered in chorus to protest. The point of their protest was not only the petition, but the legion behind it. In 1659, Quaker Mary Westwood published *These Several Papers*, or the *7000 Thousand Handmaids*, is a series of petitions, edited and introduced by Mary Forster and addressed "To The Reader". Not only does this document signify a Westwood and Forster's entitlement to the press, but also the brazen public nature of Quaker documents, while bearing "witness to the number of women who joined the Quaker movement in the earliest decades" (Garman 26). Finally, if with Speght, women found courage to fight back loudly and publicly, it was with Margaret Fell that they found a woman to follow, walking and talking their way into the public arena.

As Catie Gill argues in *Women in the Seventeenth-century Quaker Community* (2005), Fell was the only woman who took on an "indisputedly leading role" in the sect and was the "most prolific woman writer" of the Quakers (11-13);[39] if Margaret Fell acted as an anomaly, she became one which Quakers aspired to. Her *Women's Speaking Justified* (1667) seems sick to death with the debate about women's foray into the sermonizing and preaching arena and backs itself up with biblical authority to defend women's right to speak. Those who argue that women do not have the right to speak, she blasts, speak against "the church of Christ," and Christ himself, the "seed of woman" and are therefore necessarily "the seed of the serpent, wherein lodgeth the enmity" (5). Fell pulls no punches; those who speak against the right of women to speech are not only doing the devil's work, they are his kin.

After the Civil War, the Act of General Pardon and Oblivion (1652) gave amnesty to all those who had fought against the parliamentary forces. However, there were still numerous laws on the books aimed at squashing radical sects, and by virtue, silencing women. After the Restoration (1660), Edward Hyde, First Earl of Clarendon, extended these laws with a program of four Acts, designed to keep a tighter reign on sectarians and reestablish the authority of the Church of England: the Quaker Act (1662) required all citizens to swear an oath of allegiance to the king; the Act of Uniformity (1662) required that the Book of Common Prayer, with all its rites and ceremonies, be used in church services; the Conventicle Act (1664) forbade the holding of non-Anglican religious meetings of more than four people at a time; and the Five Mile Act (1665) prevented sectarians and nonconformists[40] from settling in incorporated and chartered towns.[41] With his Royal Declaration of Indulgence (1672), Charles II attempted to suspend the enforcement of the laws, and to allow a limited number of non-conformist chapels to operate (subject to royal approval). Deeming the Declaration pro-Catholic, however, Parliament forced Charles to withdraw it. James II also tried to enact a Declaration of Indulgence (1687), but it too failed due to anti-Catholic forces in Parliament. In a strange déjà vu, the prophet went missing a lot like her dark sister the witch did: she was legislated into silence. Moreover, when it became clear that King Jesus wasn't showing up for this round, the prophet was simply out of a job. Although other sects and prophets like the French Prophets, Camisards, Quietists, Philadephians, and Swedenborgians would appear, some sects simply ran out of steam, or like the Quakers, re-branded their public image to a quieter, less threatening, and ultimately more palatable one. Most women, however, simply stepped down from their tubs, flipped them over, returned to their washing, and like their dark sisters, quietly waited.

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[39] In "Quaker Pamphleteering," Kate Peters notes that up to 1656, Martha Simonds had published as many tracts as Fell herself. (27)

[40] The OED defines sectarian as "originally, an adherent of the 'sectarian party' (i.e. the Independents as designated by the Presbyterians); subsequently, a member of a schismatic sect, a schismatic; a non-conformist is defined as "a person adhering to the doctrine but not the usages of the Church of England (now *hist.*). Later (esp. after the Act of Uniformity of 1662 and the consequent ejection from their livings of those ministers who refused to conform): a member of a Church which is separated from the Church of England; (in modern use, usually) a Protestant Dissenter."

[41] The Conventicle Act and the Five Mile Act were repealed in 1689, with the passage of the Toleration Act. See Phyllis Mack's *Visionary Women* (1992), p. 266.

Chapter Breakdown: Tools and Approaches

When women became public figures, their communities sought to understand them by classifying them. Moreover, Diane Purkiss explains that most women had internalized this Aristotelian division, locating themselves on the good side of the gulf by placing the witch on the other. She argues that, "whereas most historians see the witch as the church's Other, or man's Other, I'm suggesting here that early modern women could also represent the witch as their Other, that female anxieties, fears and self fashioning could also shape the notion of 'witch' at the popular level" (*Witch* 97). If the average woman saw the witch as her other, how did she see the prophet? The ecstatic prophet may speak from within the bedchamber, or be book-ended by likeminded sisters, but once she took up the prophetic banner, she was no longer *normal* (if she ever had been), nor was she, like Mary Howgill and Barbara Blaugdone, welcome within her own community, or anyone else's. Apart from women like Anna Trapnel and Anne Bodenham, who felt the weight of actual witchcraft accusations, did other prophets likewise see themselves in relation to witches?

Beside the witch, standing at the edge of the threshold, the prophet was, whether she liked it or not, closer to her dark sister than she was to the conventional woman on the other side of the door.

Although there has been considerable work done on both early modern English witches and prophets, no major work published thus far has attempted to consider in detail the interplay between witchcraft and prophecy in seventeenth-century England. This thesis begins by looking at the intimate interrelations and broadens out, in three progressively larger circles, toward the most public ways in the witch and prophet were framed. I begin by investigating the function of their speech acts, move on to look at the way witches and prophets embodied their spiritualities, extend the argument to investigate how their personal subjectivities were doubled, and end with an examination of the ways witches and prophets were, first and finally, constructed by their communities.

Chapter One will rely on four theorists while considering how language functioned for these early modern Englishwomen. My approach will loosely couple the ideas of Monique Wittig, and John Austin and John R. Searle's theories on language, to explore how the witch and prophet's words violently stamped reality (49). Austin and Searle's contributions to speech act theory give us a grid upon which to expand Wittig's assertions, locating the source of power for prophetic and malefic language, as illocutionary and perlocutionary speech acts. According to Austin and Searle, illocutionary acts say and do something simultaneously, and perlocutionary acts produce results after the fact; both kinds of speech acts change reality by being spoken. When we understand how the words of witches and prophets operated, we can begin to grasp the power and danger inherent in their public speech.

I will also loosely couple Stuart Clark and Judith Butler in order to consider the more practical matter of how witches and prophets influenced and threatened hierarchical order through public speech acts and publications. Although these women claimed power, they also became visible to those with even more power, and faced sublime and deadly consequences for their nerviness. Women who cursed or prayed in Latin might be witches, and witches might also use the gallows as a last stage on which they could define themselves; however, all these women were keenly aware of the power of their speech acts. Whereas some tried to reintegrate themselves into Christian discourse, others used their last words to shock and shame the system. Prophetic utterances likewise had the ability to heal or harm. Although prophets spoke with God's authority, they did so within their own agency as divine interpreters.

The second chapter examines embodied spirituality. The spiritual energy which surged through women's bodies was believed to mark them. While the bodies of the prophets were supposed to visually validate the prophecy that flowed through them (via inedia, amenorrhea, or trances),[42] the bodies of the demonically touched were also supposed to be marked through a toughness of the skin, an inexplicable ability to float, or the presence of the Devil's mark.[43] Body and language are often elided in discourses by and about female witches and prophets; language represented women's access to power, and their bodies were supposed to manifest that power literally. A woman's body might be as easily deconstructed as her words; she would be physically as well as textually interrogated, to *prove* she was a real witch or prophet. During Sarah Wight's prophesying, her chamber became a public space; she displayed her shrunken frame as a Protestant relic, a body visibly sacrificed to the power of the Word flowing through it.[44] By exploiting the prophet's body, the public could see God at work with their own eyes.

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[42] Inedia is the ability to live without consuming food (or to survive on a patently insufficient amount of food, such as the bread and wine taken during Communion). A group of people still exists, under the name Breatharians, who claim to be able to get all the sustenance they require from the air. Amenorrhea is the absence, cessation, or suppression of menstruation. Seen in cases of severe fasting, excessive physical training, or stress, amenorrhea can cause bone loss and lead to osteoporosis. Visionary trances were supposed to close women off from the world, so they could commune with God alone. Marked by the inability to see, hear, taste, or feel, these trances moved visionary women to a space between life and death. See Phyllis Mack's *Visionary Women* (1992), pp. 127-64.

[43] Whereas in continental Europe, the Devil's mark was originally believed to be a vaguely recognizable figure or an animal shape, made with the Devil's cloven foot, it later was believed to be hidden and detectable only by its unnatural insensibility. In England, the witch's mark appeared most often in later texts, as a teat from which the witch's familiar was supposed to drink as reward for the malefic crimes he or she committed at the witch's behest. See James Sharpe's *Instruments of Darkness* (1996), pp. 72-3.

The Devil's influence could, allegedly, be established through a series of quasi-scientific tests such as swimming a witch: binding her and tossing her in the water to see if she would float. Mary Sutton was publicly dunked to prove that the Devil had made her impervious to drowning. Moreover, because the Devil's plan was manifest in the body of the witch, attacking her physically became a means to control his misrule. The witch's body manifests her verbal power; examiners studiously searched for the witch's mark as physical proof of her demonic pact; water was supposed to reject the witch; pricking or scratching a witch was believed to undo her protective hardness, and reverse her spell. The legalized torture of witches did not exist in England, but witch-hunters like Matthew Hopkins readily walked women for days, kept them awake in the hope that their familiars would come to save them, searched, scratched, and pricked them. Once corporeal evidence was located, its existence was written back into the witch's history: the evidence was made to justify the original assertion, and the witch's power was ultimately invalidated by executing her.

Understanding her body is just as crucial in understanding the prophet as it is in understanding the witch. By developing Phyllis Mack's ideas on how the body of the prophet "was understood as a potentially explosive device, the carrier of an inflammable spiritual essence" (*Visionary Women* 23), I hope to change the idea that the prophet was a mere bladder, which momentarily held the words of the Holy Spirit before gurgling them out. Marshall McLuhan's proposal, in *Understanding Media* (1964), that "the medium is the message" will be used to help argue that the prophet must be part of her prophecy; her body is part of its text. By speaking during periods of ecstasy and inedia, millennial writers like Sarah Wight and Eleanor Channel validated textual authority with corporeal signifiers. Barbara Blaugdone validates her profound insight and communion with God by documenting the severe physical abuse that accompanied them. The brutal physical strain of Katherine Evans and Sarah Cheevers' missionary work reflects their inner spiritual journey. I will also expand Hilary Hinds' work on the materiality of women's imaginations to illustrate how the definitive features of the prophet elided her with the witch. Unruly women were believed to corporealize their aberrant thoughts as monstrous children; Ranter Mary Adams prophesied that she would bear the new Messiah, and supposedly produced a deformed child, who quickly (and conveniently) died. The prophet could also physicalize the wrongness of her beliefs or the arrogance of her position with a visible deformity; Anna Trapnel believed her audience had come to see "a monster or some ill-shaped creature."[45]

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[44] See Henry Jessey's *Exceeding Riches of Grace* (1647), pp. 31, 90-1, 137-9, and 142-3.

The third chapter will address the anomalies that complicate tidy theorizing about witches and prophets: spiritual second selves. Expanding on Claude Lecouteaux's understanding of the double, and Frances Dolan's concept of familiarity, I will look at the familiar as a subject extension of the witch. I will then turn to consider how all second selves, embodied as familiars, faeries, spirits, demons, angels, God, Satan, or even the woman's own spiritual self, were extensions of spiritually significant women's identities, inextricably connected to them legally, socially, and spiritually. The witch's familiar was a family heirloom, a totem, a projection of her shadow self, livestock, or a house pet. Children, antagonized neighbors, examiners, and family members conjured up familiars. When witches responded to accusations that they owned and used a familiar, they called it into being. It became an intractable admission, akin to admitting to making a covenant with the Devil. We need to understand her familiar in order to understand where the witch got her power.

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[45] Public women were not the only monsters in England at this time. The rhetoric of monstrosity was well-exploited "in the 1640s [and] was not entirely reducible to the Civil War and its associated propaganda" (Burns 191-2). Rather, the "exhibition of monsters was an established form of spectacle in early modern England and the war did not end it. The late 1630s and early 1640s were particularly marked by a tour of England and Scotland by one of the best-known self-exhibiting monsters of the seventeenth-century, the Neapolitan nobleman Lazarus Colloredo . . . who was joined to his stunted twin" (*ibid.*). Trapnel would have certainly known about the exhibition of freaks in England at this time, and, ironically, that prophesying somehow equated her in public opinion with deformity

Condemned witches like Anne Baker and Joan Willimot might have been revered as prophets; however, their spirits were read as familiars. Conversely, Anne Jeffries' faeries and Margaret Muschamp's angels easily might have been interpreted as familiars. Although all of these women were counseled by spiritual second selves, who gave them information, power, and authority, only two of them went to the gallows as witches. Even when the symptoms were the same, reputations made one woman a sinner and another a savior. However, an ongoing relationship with the Devil did not necessarily make a woman a witch, either. Meric Casaubon (1655) and Henry More (1662) wrote of the dangers of the burgeoning religious enthusiasm; John Stachniewski's *The Persecutory Imagination* explores how Calvinism led people to suppose they were reprobates, seeing sin and devils everywhere. The differences between demonic possession and divine ecstasy are also often illegible. Joan Drake and Hannah Allen use their long, personal, and demonic torments to assert spiritual specialness that might have progressed, as it did for Sarah Wight and Anna Trapnel, into prophetic authority. The world was not so easily divided into black and white, however. In *Servants of Satan*, Joseph Klaits writes that contemporary ecclesiastical authorities throughout Europe strove to suppress the inward movement of religious ecstasy. The ecstatic prophetic mode, often perceived as dangerous, flourished in England when "religious revolutionaries" gained power under Cromwell (110).[46] Influenced by constant preaching about sin and possession by ministers like John Darrell, the infamous Puritan exorcist,[47] and by the Calvinist belief in reprobation made renowned by William Perkins, many believed that they were damned already. Because both prophecy and witchcraft depend on communication with the spirit world, the difference between the woman who speaks to spirits, and the woman who was overtaken by them, was often a confusing space to interpret, even for the woman herself; religious enthusiasm could easily degrade into obsession or demonic possession.[48] Enthusiasts would see the Devil stalking them wherever they went. Believing they were reprobates, it was not long before many enthusiasts began to display signs of possession. Klaits writes: "a practical advantage to society of associating demonic possession with witchcraft was that the connection suggested an affective cure for the disorder. Executing the witch seemed an effective remedy" (111-112). Exorcism existed in Protestant England; however, its relationship to Roman Catholicism imbued the process with a taint of magic. It was less problematic theologically to find and execute the source of the possession (the witch), than it was to draw the spirits out in the traditional, Catholic way, with its Latin rites and rituals. The focus discernibly shifted away from exorcism, to witchcraft. I will look at how their spiritual second selves helped these women, their supporters, and even their critics comprehend how normal women came to wield such extraordinary power.

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[46] The death of Cromwell's grandmother played an intriguing part in the case of the *Witch of Warboys* (1589). Fancying herself a witch hunter, Lady Cromwell accused Mother Samuel of witchcraft and tried to appeal to her with many "good speeches" (Rosen 253). Lady Cromwell's death soon afterwards was laid at Mother Samuel's door, among other alleged crimes. Ronald Holmes, in *Witchcraft in British History*, hypothesizes that this family story, told by his sisters, would have been Oliver Cromwell's early introduction to witchcraft (147).

[47] After conducting what Keith Thomas refers to as a "series of spectacular cures of allegedly possessed persons, first in Derbyshire in 1586, then in 1596-7 in Nottinghamshire, Lancashire and Staffordshire," John Darrell was convicted of fraud by the High Commission in 1598 (483).

Chapter Four, which looks at how spiritually remarkable women were created by their communities, is situated with an extensive close reading of witchcraft cases and a survey of dominant contemporary sectarian movements. English witch-hunts never developed the "fantastic complications of continental demonology and inquisitorial practice"; rather, they "were simple, related to local experience and not very closely integrated with official Christianity" (qtd. Geis and Bunn 54).[49] Sharpe believes that "most of the persons tried for witchcraft in early modern England (and one suspects, in most other parts of Europe) found themselves in court as a result of actions leveled against them by their neighbors" (33-4). Women and children also brought about the allegations and served as witnesses at trials.[50] The dynamics of village life influenced English witchcraft cases; a history of suspicion played a role, as did the economic stature of the accused and the accuser. Allegations rose up, trickled down, or moved across the same economic level. The victims of witchcraft, mostly acquaintances of the accused, were often children. Women, however, accused each other with unexpected abandon.

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[48] John Stachniewski writes: "William Perkins became the most influential English Calvinist. Calvin himself was England's most published author between 1548 and 1650" (*The Persecutory Imagination* 17).

[49] Although critics like Gail Kern Paster claim that some witches in England were tortured via sleep deprivation and dunking, Diane Purkiss points out that, outside of the activities of Matthew Hopkins, "other repellent practices which may have occurred, such as swimming witches were not usually sanctioned by law, and were in any case a trial by ordeal, not a milder form of torture but a completely different forensic process" (235). In *The Discovery of Witches* (1647), Hopkins explains and justifies his actions, claiming "that never did any Witch complaine in the time of their keeping

Witches were produced in their communities through a series of cross-accusations, fermenting suspicions, purported coincidences, and poor timing. Accusations moved in three main ways: from below, on a par, and from above--from children and servants, peers, and social betters. The witch threatened the only source of power women had, which was power over their children and their homes. In *The Examination and Confession of Certain Witches,* Mother Waterhouse's cat, aptly named Sathan, is sent to frighten Agnes Brown and arrogantly wanders in and out of the milk house, demanding butter (A4v). Purkiss hypothesizes that witchcraft accusations, by illustrating the ways in which the witch threatened the domestic sphere, were, though born from a threat to the State, the Church, or God, also implicated in threats to the individual. I will expand on and complicate the ways in which the witch threatened local power, while the prophet threatened political

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for want of rest, but after they had beat their heads together in the Gaole," and that the accused were kept walking "for indeed if they be suffered so to couch, immediately comes their familiars into the room and scareth the watchers" (55). When the text asks about the "abominable, inhumane and unmerciful tryall" of dunking, Hopkins proclaims that it demonstrated to the witches that the Devil had lied to them about protecting them, and that it was never used as legal evidence. He cites the authority of James' *Dæmonologie* to prove the validity of the test.

[50] Unlike their German sisters, English witches were not part of covens nor organized communities; rather, they were solitary practitioners, or members of a kin group who were often assumed to have learned their craft from a mother or grandmother. See Deborah Willis' chapter on "(Un)Neighborlly Nurture" in *Malevolent Nurture* (1995), pp. 27-81.

and ecclesiastical power. I will also use Diane Purkiss' work on the role of cunning women in the community to bring the prophet into even closer proximity to the witch.

James Sharpe argues that it was much harder to bring a witch to trial in seventeenth-century England than many modern critics have previously assumed; a traveling judge of the assizes court could try witchcraft cases only four times a year, accusers had to be citizens of good standing (often upper-class), and they were required to produce witnesses to corroborate their testimony. These witnesses had to be convinced to leave their labors to testify, and often demanded payment for their services. Essentially, while it was easy to accuse someone of witchcraft, it was a difficult task to try her on it. Why did the prophet, who was as socially and politically threatening as the witch, (most often) escape the ordeal of trial? I will follow the reproductive path of accusations as they moved through communities, and examine how women negotiated their own stories within the deafening buzz of accusations whizzing around them.

Community was also part of prophetic identity: the works of prophets were signed and authorized by their communities, though different women experienced this in different ways. Although the community came to see them, bedridden ecstatic prophets heard only their own voices, singing in chorus with Christ's in the hushed quiet of their bedchamber. Awake and cogent during their prophesying, Old-Testament-style prophets found a community outside their bedchambers. These Deborahs stood apart; like warrior queens, with or without oracular foresight, they judged, condemned, and sought to lift their nation upon their strong backs, ready to lead it into a new era. Female sectarian communities could potentially offer a receptive and encouraging environment to members of their own sex; women like Mary Howgill and Martha Simmonds found that this was not always the case. I will argue that community created the titles of "witch" and "prophet," and filled these positions in order to invest their own lives with the monstrous and miraculous.

Strange Bedfellows

The differences between prophecy and witchcraft, ecstasy and possession, and oracularity and magic were problematic to early modern scholars, and continue to be so today. The purpose of this thesis is to observe the seemingly disparate elements which went into constructing the witch and prophet, with a few crucial ends in mind. I want to focus on the frameworks within which these women lived and spoke, in order to locate the moments of agency that exist within even the most formulaic texts. Witches and prophets were more than legal and editorial pawns. Their bodies may have been used against them, co-opted by examiners who saw witch's marks in hemorrhoids and skin tags, and by devout followers who saw the wondrous in an emaciated body; however, these women lived in their bodies. They experienced spirituality, be it for good or for bad, in ways now reserved for the most ascetic. Despite the overwhelming contemporary desire to empty out witches and prophets, and make them into marionettes directed by other forces, these women found ways to insert something of themselves into the most rigid architecture.

In exploring the witch and prophet together, I will break down the divide between them, and illustrate how, in many cases, they were doing and saying the same kinds of things. My reasons for this are twofold. First, I want to illustrate how crucial it is to understand the witch in order to understand the prophet. Much work has been done on women of vision in early modern England, with only passing reference to witches. Second, I want to encourage literary recuperative work on witches. Witches seem to exist in a critical vacuum, studied as though their influence was not felt outside their villages. We have shied away from witches because they come to us from the fringe, their voices distorted by multiple mediations; however, in looking at numerous cases, we can begin to hear them through the static. When looked at consecutively and in conjunction, witches and prophets can be seen filling the same kind of need, in and around their communities.

Witches and prophets have inflamed the imaginations of current and contemporary authors, but they were real women, women whose influence was keenly felt by those who not only believed in them, but who saw in them both the work of Satan and the reassuring presence of God.

"Imperfectly Performing": Identity through Language

But the dread of God was upon me, and it made some Tremble, and some said I was a witch.

--Barbara Blaugdone (1691)

The similarity between how witches and prophets navigate language necessitates looking at them side by side; both groups are defined and define themselves by their ability to manipulate language effectively. In *Renaissance Self-Fashioning,* Stephen Greenblatt argues that "self-fashioning is always, though not exclusively, in language" (9). It is through language that the witch and prophet always, though not exclusively, define themselves and are, in turn, defined. Language is the single most obvious marker of diabolism and divinity; it is the most public, fluid, interpretable, and hence, the most dangerous defining characteristic for the witch and the prophet. Early modern Englishwomen supposedly had access to a moderately wide spectrum of language, so long as they constrained themselves within religious discourse; however, being overly and overtly devout led to accusations of enthusiasm or hysteria, whereas using Latin liturgies and continually calling down curses led to accusations of diabolism.[1] Even in the suffocating rigidity of legal and religious testimony, witches and prophets break these discursive rules; they speak with abandon, claim ownership over their own linguistic power, shift around the pre-ordained scripts, and either refuse to speak the lines they are prompted to, or rewrite them at the last minute to suit their own aims.

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[1] For two studies which investigate the correlation of gender and language in New England, refer to Jane Kemensky's "Female Speech and Other Demons: Witchcraft and Wordcraft in Early New England" (1998) and Elizabeth Reis' "Gender and the Meaning of Confession in Early New England" (1998). Lynette McGrath argues that women created meaning through body and language in "The Other Body: Women's Inscription of their Physical Images in 16th- and 17th-century England," *Women's Studies* 26:1 (1997): 27-58.

There are prophets and witches who come close, at least discursively, to doing and saying the same things, and, by extension, being the same people. Prophets Anna Trapnel and Barbara Blaugdone were accused of witchcraft, and Mother Lakeland, condemned as a witch, was a long-time professor of religion. In *Little Horns Doom and Downfall* (1651), Mary Cary makes a point of mentioning the wickedness of devilish oracles, while Joan Peterson and Anne Bodenham, who predicted the future, died confessing their innocence of witchcraft. The stories of these women should be considered, not as photographic negatives of each other, but in tandem, as examples of how the witches and prophets remembered in recorded history negotiated language to produce their identities.

By looking at how these women use language to construct themselves, we can recognize the strength of will it takes to fight unwelcome editorial attempts to construct and overwrite them. Michel Foucault suggests that speech does not simply represent conflict, but is "the very object of man's conflicts" (qtd. Alcoff 18). For the witch and the prophet, the speech act is a place of conflict, an assertion of power, an attempt to define self and society. Although prophecy defines itself as operating within pre-ordained and authorized modes, it was not always welcomed without suspicion and hostility. For the prophet, the act of speaking is an act of war against personal and political corruption and damnation. Even in her most benign form, the prophet still claims to be speaking for God: she foretells the future, mesmerizes her audience with spiritual power, and holds judgment over England's sinners. At her most outrageous, she bewails sin and preaches publicly against personal and spiritual corruption. The witch's power comes from her ability to perform malefic magic. Whereas her speech acts are necessarily read as acts of aggression against her peers, being interpellated as a witch is likewise an act of violence. If the witch embodies the fears of society, then the prophet is the mirror held in front of its eyes.

Their linguistic abilities make witches and prophets freaks and threats to a society intolerant of aberrations. Both struggle to assert individuality in mediated and formulaic texts. By clearly speaking as a cogent, empowered self from within the witchcraft tract, which purports to contain actual testimony and court documents, and the prophetic tract, which claims to reproduce accurately prophecy and conversation and recall conflict, witches and prophets demonstrate the ways they negotiate these formulaic discursive constructions to represent themselves. The semantic choices they make illustrate their savvy negotiation of tropes of passivity, victim-hood, power, and authority. These choices also illustrate chilling moments of helplessness; the texts of witches and prophets, some of the most powerful common women of their time, contain episodes of fear, dread, and resignation.

Doing and Saying Simultaneously

Language constructs prophetic and malefic identity -- it necessarily operates as a backdrop to all other ways of discussing the witch and prophet within their worlds. Louise Jackson posits that "language can also be said to create experience since it constructs existence and identity. Once a woman was labeled 'witch,' with her original experiences distorted and set within this context, this was what she became" (70). The same phenomenon occurred with the early modern English prophet; once a woman was recognized as a prophet, or at least recognized as speaking like one, her words became prophecies. Whether language acted as a demonic invocation, a curse, an order to a familiar, a prediction, a warning, or a sermon, the witch and prophet did what they did linguistically; the speakers' language influences reality and sets events in motion.

Studying witchcraft and prophecy in tandem illustrates the essential flaw in separating the worlds of the sign, the signifier, and the signified, as if each independently represented the other, rather than influencing and altering one another. Witchcraft and prophecy are word-magic; words do not simply represent reality: they change it. In "The

Mark of Gender," Monique Wittig writes that in modern, as in classical, theory

> physical or social reality and language are disconnected. Abstraction, symbols, signs do not belong to the real. There is on one side the real, the referent, and on the other side language. It is as though the relation to language were a relation of function only and not one of transformation. (77)

Reality shifts to accommodate new meaning when the speech act takes place in front of an internal or external audience; witnesses create meaning as much as speakers. The witch changed reality because her audience believed she could, and responded to the world as changed after she spoke; members of her audience had visions, became ill, and even died. Everyday compliments, queries, and insults became curses or spells when the butter would not churn, a child got sick, a spouse was killed, or even when a lover felt over-compelled to visit.[2] Likewise, for the prophet, her speech acts changed not only the woman herself, but also the community that gathered around her. Not only did participating in prophetic discourse make the woman into a prophet, but it made her audience into believers in her prophecies, and in God's active interest in humanity and politics. Prophetic words changed the way the listeners participated in their own worlds.

In his groundbreaking study *How to Do Things with Words* (1962), John L. Austin expands his dichotomy of how language functions between constatives, which represent saying or reporting something, and performatives, which say and do simultaneously (6). He further clarifies his definitions by offering the tripartite structure of locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts, as representing the three ways language functions. Locutionary acts are "roughly equivalent to uttering a certain sentence with a certain 'meaning' in the traditional sense" (108). Illocutionary acts[3] "such as informing, ordering, warning, undertaking, &c., [are] utterances which have a certain (conventional) force"(*ibid.*) Finally, "perlocutionary acts" deal with "what we bring about or achieve by saying something, such as convincing, persuading, deterring, and even, say, surprising or misleading" (*ibid.*). Austin goes on to clarify that one of the major differences between the illocutionary and perlocutionary act[4] is that perlocutionary acts and their results (effects or sequels) are created through unconventional means. In applying Austin's theories to both witchcraft and prophecy, it becomes clear that the witch and prophet's words work because they are understood as moving beyond regular locutionary speech acts. They do and say something, as illocutionary acts do, but they operate through unconventional means, like perlocutionary acts, and herein they become both powerful and dangerous. Austin assigns speech acts to five categories which can be used to hypothesize the semantic nuances which separate malefic and prophetic speech from otherwise authorized speech:[5]

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[2] Pamela J. Stewart and Andrew Strathern's *Witchcraft, Sorcery, Rumours, and Gossip* (2004) ix-xiv, 1-28, and H. Sidky's *Witchcraft, Lycanthropy, Drugs and Disease* (2004) provide broad social and anthropological frameworks for how witchcraft accusations are created in communities.

Verdictives	Typified by giving a finding; a verdict, an estimate, an appraisal	*Acts used both by witches and prophets to define themselves and as a means of defining them*
Excercitives	Done by exercising power, rights, influences; appointing, voting, ordering, urging	*Position the witch and prophet to wield malefic power or prophecy; the admission of diabolic union or the claim to be speaking for God*

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[3] John R. Searle argued that there is no real difference between locutionary and illocutionary acts. The collapsing of these terms into just "locutionary" is a trend picked up by most subsequent scholars of speech act theory. Searle's *Mind* (2004) moves focus from language to a study of mental phenomena as part of the natural word.

[4] In *Excitable Speech* (1997), Judith Butler clarifies Austin's understanding of the illocutionary and perlocutionary acts; she argues, "illocutionary speech acts produce effects without any lapse of time; the saying is itself the doing, and they are one another simultaneously" (17). Perlocutionary acts, conversely, produce effects after the fact; they lead to "certain effects that are not the speech act itself" (3).

[5] Austin sums up his own five-part structure by saying, "a verdictive is an exercise of judgment. The excercitive is an assertion of the influence of exercising of power, the commisive is an assuming of an obligation, or declaration of intention, the behabitive is the adopting of an attitude, and the expositive is the clarifying of reasons, arguments, and communications" (162).

Commissives	Commitments to do something, promising, or undertaking; declarations of intention	*Associated with the half-mumbled threats of retribution associated with the charity-denied trope, or the humility topoi which often book-end prophetic works.*
Behabitives	Involve attitudes and social behavior; apologizing, congratulating, cursing	*Most specifically associated with witchcraft as prophecy — presume understanding between speaker and audience that the speaker's speech has active power to change something*
Expositives	Illustrate how we use words, are expository; "I concede," "I illustrate"	*Part of the identifiers witches and prophets use in their confessions and tracts*

In analyzing how witches and prophets are constructed through language, reading their speech acts as illocutionary and perlocutionary explains why these women were perceived as dangerous: their words changed reality. More specifically, reading speech acts as excercitives[6] bases their linguistic abilities in culturally recognized, inherent, borrowed, or negotiated power. Likewise, the behabitive, which includes the necessity of comprehending social behaviors, and "the notion of reacting to other people's behaviour and fortunes and of attitudes to someone else's past conduct or imminent conduct" can be used to contextualize both the impulse and the power behind witches and prophets' words (159). All malefic and prophetic speech acts operate, however, on a series of inter-linked levels; Robin Briggs argues they use a "complex code" full "of implicit understandings which are all too likely to escape the modern eye" (62). In being accused, the witch was "really being invited to accept responsibility, then secure pardon and immunity by removing the evil" (62). In using speech act theory to deconstruct the language attributed to witches and prophets, it becomes clear that the kinds of language performed by these dark sisters helped to construct them, publicly and linguistically, as they themselves rewrote the world.

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[6] Jonathan Culpeper has already begun connecting excercitives and behabitives to cursing; see "Constructing Witches and Spells: Speech Acts and Activity Types in Early Modern England" *Journal of Historical Pragmatics* 1:1 (2000): 97-116.

"If ever the devil was born without a pair of horns / it was you, Jezebel, it was you." - Frankie Laine (May 1951, Columbia Records)

Witches, as Jackson proposes, are associated with the power of language as a means of classifying, defining, and interpreting the world, but also with the inherent problem of being, in turn, categorized and defined through language (70). Margaret Murray's influential, but misplaced, efforts to contextualize witches within ritualistic spell-casting, coven-based goddess worship, gave birth to a new mythological system, which is still proliferating the idea of "the burning times" in popular culture.[7] In this myth, witches, practicing ancient magic rituals and secret spirituality, were mistaken for women in league with the Devil and summarily executed. Despite Murray's numerous factual errors, the idea that witches worked spells has remained a constant in popular representations of early modern and contemporary witches. Recent titles, like Jennifer Knapp's *Beauty Magic: 101 Recipes, Spells, and Secrets* (2004) and *Hex Appeal: Seductive Spells for the Sassy Sorceress* by Lucy Summers (2004), suggest that modern witches can alter reality with a few well-chosen words.

Although most witchcraft accusations were based on overhearing the alleged witch mumble at, threaten, or praise the supposed victim, the idea of spell-casting is intrinsically interwoven with witchcraft. A few spells surface in works such as Reginald Scot's *A Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1584) and the Lancashire witch trial tract (1612); however, the women themselves, defined as witches by their ability to use language, make scant references to how they supposedly cast the spells which hurt or healed.[8] Witches were not identified with the spells they used; they were associated with the power of language.

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[7] For more information on popular conceptions of witches, refer to Diane Purkiss' *The Witch in History* (1996).

The following section seeks to illustrate how the public articulation of common linguistic tropes, like Latin prayers, curses, and blasphemies, defined women as witches. It will then look at how women's identities as witches were, in examinations, manufactured question by question, and how women resisted these definitions with constructions of their own. I will also look at how women used the gallows confession as a last opportunity for a public re-appropriation of their own illocutionary agency. It was not the spell which made the seventeenth-century woman into a witch; it was the perceived effectiveness of her public articulations. If the kind of language she used defined the witch, the witch likewise took language and made it transformative.

"Whether in laten or in englyshe": Dangerous Utterances

> *Let us remember the Widow Barnes, being an ancient Woman, and dwelling in Cornhyll in London, who frequented much swearing & neither friendly rebuking, nor godly persuasions, could turne her heart from this wicked and detestable exercise […] but thereby laboured to defeat a […] of her right, the Devil who […] to such cruell abuse, caused her to cast herself out her window into the street and there break her neck. (Munday B3)*

In early modern England, common speech acts became heterodox in the right circumstances. Public exclamations were common; praise, condemnation, information, and implorations were not limited to the demonically or divinely inspired speaker. Personal and doctrinal insults, scolding, and cursing were also commonly used speech acts; women were justified in using these linguistic modes because they left power in the hands of God and the state. Peter Rushton[9] explains, "Christian prayers and phrases were such used in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries for charms, spells, and curses" (207). In his text *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (1971), Keith Thomas likewise noted that during the "Civil War the Royalist clergy were quick to call down God's curse upon those who abolished episcopacy and proscribed the Anglican Church" (504). Members of both sides of the conflict developed heightened awareness of cursing; Lodowick Muggleton, for example, "enjoyed issuing curses, whether in person or by letter; "'It did him more good,' he said, 'than if a man had given him forty shillings'" (*ibid.*). Thomas notes that Muggleton's cursing produced some startlingly effective results. However, the "line dividing a curse from a prayer was extremely thin" (507). Cursing was acceptable; but successful cursing implied that women had power they could summon at will. Even if they were backed up by either God or the Devil, women who sought to exert influence of their own accord were disregarding social and doctrinal laws.

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[8] Elements of image magic appear in *The Most Cruell and Bloody Murther committed by an Inkeepers Wife* (1606) C2v-C3, Thomas Potts' *The Wonderfull Discoverie of Witches* (1612), *The Wonderful Discoverie of the Witchcrafts of Margaret and Phillip Flower* (1619) F3, and *A True and Impartial Relation* (1682) 10, 19. For information on written charms and spells, refer to Owen Davies' *Cunning Folk* (2003), 148-160; see also Robin Briggs' "Circling the Devil" (2001), 162. For the practice of medicinal, talismanic, and divinatory magic in the middle ages, see Michael D. Bailey's *Battling Demons: Witchcraft, Heresy, and Reform in the late Middle Ages* (2003), pp. 119-138; Karen Jolly's "Medieval Magic, Definitions, Beliefs, and Practices" (2001), 27-66; and Claire Fanger's *Conjuring Spirits: Texts and Traditions of Medieval Ritual Magic* (1998).

There is little intentional difference between a curse and witchcraft; both use what Wittig calls, in "The Mark of Gender," the "plasticity of the real to language": the way the real world conforms to the ways it is linguistically signified (78). Wittig argues that language is not a "relation of function," but one of "transformation" (77). Curses and spells affect reality. Curses call on God to deal out divine retribution where moral, social, and legal methods are slow or not forthcoming in resolving dispute. Supposedly, if the cause were just and the curse were appropriate, Christians could curse their neighbors without risk. Any supernatural effect the curse might carry would operate well within the realm of just revenge.

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[9] Rushton's article, which appears in *Witchcraft, Magic, and Demonology*, is a reprint. The original pagination is used here.

Merely enunciating negative words could also set malefic magic in progress, however. Thomas explores the nebulousness of linguistic signifiers, which contributes to the "making of a witch" (502). Scolding, cursing, blaspheming, and swearing are commonly used in witchcraft narratives, tracts, and salacious accounts, to illustrate a woman's moral weakness; ill-timed or ill-used speech could condemn her. Christine Larner argues that "the women who went to the stake during the witch-hunt went cursing, often for the crime of cursing" (274). The person who decided the difference between a curse and a malefic spell also determined if the speaker was a witch.[10]

Prudence Lee's confession begins to illustrate the conflation of cursing and witchcraft, simply by its placement immediately after Joan Peterson's witchcraft case in *The Witch of Wapping*. Lee's story recounts her betrayal and the murder of her husband. She may not have killed her husband through witchcraft, but her cursing elided her with witches. She confessed that

> she had been a very lewd liver, and much given to cursing and swearing, for which the Lord being offended with her, had suffered her to be brought to that untimely end, she further confessed that being jealous of her husband, and some unfitting words passing between them, in her passion she stabbed him, for which she earnestly prayed to the Lord that he would

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[10] In "Was Witch-Hunting Woman-Hunting?," Christine Larner argues that women had two kinds of linguistic powers derived from the established order: the power to "defend herself or to curse" (273). In *Thinking with Demons* (1997), Stuart Clark, while arguing for the efficacy of written and spoken word magic, proposes that "charms, spells, and curses produced physical changes in objects and persons; actions done to images were conveyed to the things the images depicted; talismans drew down harmful qualities from higher powers" (282). Richard Suggett traces the "significant correspondences between witchcraft and cursing" in early modern Wales (91). He cites Thomas Cooper, who in 1617 illustrated the danger of angry public speech acts by claiming that "'when a bad-tongued woman shall curse a party, and death shall follow shortly, this is a shrewd token she is a witch,' even when 'invocating upon her bare knees (for so the manner is) the vengeance of God'" (qtd. Suggett 92). For more information on the power of cursing, see Brenda Danet and Bryna Bogoch's "'Whosoever alters this. May God turn his face from him on the day of Judgment': Curses in Anglo-Saxon Legal Documents" *Journal of American Folklore* 105 (1992): 132-165. On curse tablets, see Laura Apps and Andrew Gow's *Male Witches in Early Modern Europe* (2003) 123-124.

> forgive both that and all her other grievous sins, desiring that as she was a President,[11] so she might be a warning to all women, that they attempt to do nothing rashly, especially against their husbands. (7)

Lee appears to be saying that God, angered by their lifestyle, and displeased with her cursing, punished her with this "untimely fate" (7). Lee brutally stabbed her adulterous husband[12] after finding him in the company of another woman, but the tract emphasizes instead her swearing and cursing. Although the godly can call down justified divine wrath, someone who regularly swears and curses crosses the line from faithful to wicked. Morphing from witch to martyr, Lee tried to change the world from the gallows with edifying words that drew attention to sin. God did not bring her to an untimely end because she stabbed her husband, who himself was a "lewd liver,"[13] but because she swore and cursed like a witch.

Jonathan Culpeper uses speech act theory to address specifically how the witch's curse operates. He looks at Searle's model of the speech act and views curses as "declarations," which bring about "some alteration in the status or condition of the referred to object or objects solely in the virtue of it being successfully performed" (qtd. 106). However, few published cases depict the witch actually cursing or putting spells on her neighbors. Although malefic intent may have been perceived, early modern English witchcraft tracts feature few direct quotations or even paraphrases of curses, spells, or malefic speech acts. Rather, what we have falls into the category of an assumed "excercitive": the "exercising of powers, rights or influence" (Austin 151). One can look at what the witch does as a perlocutionary act, because the effects of her speech are perceived after the fact. Witchcraft is not necessarily about how words simultaneously translate into effects; the connection between a speech act and its causal effect often lacks demonstrable proof. For those with stakes in proving the witch's malefic agency, the effects, however different from the assumed intent, necessarily thread their way back to the perlocutionary utterance.

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[11] Likely Lee means that she is acting as a precedent for other women.

[12] For more information on representations of the early modern English female criminal, see: Susan. C. Staub's *Nature's Cruel Stepdames: Murderous Women in Street Literature of Seventeenth-Century England* (Pittsburgh: Duquesne UP, 2005); Garthine Walker's *Crime, Gender and the Social Order in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2003); and Mary E. Fissel's *Vernacular Bodies* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2004).

[13] We are not told if Lee killed her husband, though this is implied in her death by burning, the penalty for petty treason (the murder of a husband). The stabbing, however, though it was the reason she was brought to trial, was not her primary offence; it was her lewd living, swearing, and cursing.

According to Thomas Cooper, the conflation of spells and curses illustrates the importance of the performance, while asserting that any woman who has successfully cursed someone had to be receiving her power from the Devil (160-2). Joan Flower's "oathes, curses, and imprecations irreligious" made her a "monstrous malicious woman . . . a plaine Atheist," continually under suspicion because of the type of language she freely used (C2). Swollen with rage and passionate about wrath, witches were believed to be open to suggestion and easily seduced by the Devil's promises of power and retribution. Mary Smith (d. 1616), for example, was angry about cheese.[14] Specifically, she was angry about the deals and profits her neighbors made on cheese, "which shee (using the same trade) could not doe, or they better (at the least in her opinion) then she did"; consequently Smith "often times cursed them" (Roberts 45). Mary Smith's anger was so hot and loud that she unwittingly summoned the Devil.[15] Smith was then charged with, among other curses and slanders, wishing "the pox [to] light upon" Elizabeth Hancocke, and with tormenting Cecily Balye in the shape of a cat after they had an argument about sweeping. The cheese-related story appears only after seven "propositions" which appear to establish the reality of witches. Having proven they are real, Roberts goes about proving Smith was one. Edmund Newton "bought severall bargaines of Holland cheese, and sold them againe, by which she thought her benefit to be somewhat impaired, using the like kinde of trading" (64).[16] Smith, "or a spirit in her likenesse did appeare unto him, and whisked about his face (as he lay in bed) a wet cloath of very loathsome savour" (64). Smith continued tormenting Newton, but, as with her other alleged victims, she soon stopped cursing and sent in her familiars.

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[14] In "Cheese Gives You Nightmares: Old Hags and Heartburn," Caroline Oates notes numerous occurrences of cheese in stories about witches. Oates argues that cheese plays a role in numerous metaphors, and usually signifies "women, the good wife and the bad, the maternally protective, as well as the appetizingly dangerous and oppressive" (206). Cheese "signified women and, by extension, it signified sex" (*ibid.*). Cheese, it seems, was a woman's issue, and Smith's anger at her neighbor for moving in on her cheese business offers another intriguing example of female association with this coagulated milk solid.

[15] In *Treatise of Witchcraft*, Alexander Roberts notes the Devil "knoweth how to stirre up the evill affected humours of corrupt mindes" (46). The devil feeds the witch, giving her excuses to do the things she already wants to do. She, in turn, increases his power in the world by making it a just that little bit worse.

Cursing was not simply a sign of spiritual laxity and moral corruption; one might actually invoke a pact with the Devil with a curse. Elizabeth Sawyer (d. 1621) began her confession by stating that "the first time that the Devil came unto me was, when I was cursing, swearing and blaspheming" (C). She claims that "he then rushed in Upon me and never before that time did I see him, or he me: and when he, namely the Divel, came to me, the first words that hee spake unto me were these: *Oh! have I now found you cursing, swearing, and blaspheming? now you are mine" (C1).* Renouncing God and his works by cursing, swearing, and blaspheming, Sawyer became easy pickings for the Devil. Any words might be bait for the Devil; however, one could conjure the Devil more easily with Latin. In *Thinking with Demons,* Stuart Clark argues that there was "little to distinguish the Protestant from the Catholic formulations" of witchcraft; Protestants simply did not have some of the doctrinal commitments that, like the belief in purgatory and the invocation of saints, gave ancillary encouragement to belief in other spirit activity (527, 528). However, rituals like confession, penance, absolution, and even exorcism provided Catholic church-goers a sense of agency; there were avenues of assistance available both locally and in heaven. Because the "discussions of purely spiritual remedies offered by Protestantism not only defended the efficacy of faith, the Word, prayer, fasting, and vigils; they very often turned into denunciation of Catholic 'idolatry' and 'superstition'" (531). Clark notes that the Protestant belief that "Catholicism was a religion based on witchcraft arose from questioning the sense in which specific religious rituals could be said to be efficacious" (534). If the ritual worked, it must be, by extension, witchcraft.

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[16] Because the dairy was a predominantly female domain, Newton's speculative wholesale of a lot of imported cheese represented a direct economic threat not only to local producers, but to a relatively rare source of independent income for women.

Even in Protestant society, a kind of social memory of the efficacy of ritual appeared outside of its doctrinal debates, in bits of Latin prayers and phrases incorporated into counter-magic; Catholic prayers and rituals likewise became folk charms. Edmond Bower accused the infamous witch Anne Bodenham of being "much addicted to Popery and papistical fancies" (1). Further, the charm used by Anne Whittle, published in Thomas Potts' account of the Lancaster witches in *The Wonderful Discoverie of Witches* (1613), is a garbled version of a Catholic text used to pray for sick children. The charm reads:

> Three bitters hast thou bitten
> The heart, ill eye, ill tounge,
> Three bitter shall be thy boot,
> Father, Son and Holy Ghost.
> A god's name.
> Five Paternosters, five aves
> And a creed,
> In a worship of the five wounds of our Lord. (Potts E2v)

Since Catholic rituals gave followers a sense of spiritual agency, the spell was a logical extension of the prayer as an invocation for assistance. Rushton notes, "Latin prayers, the paternoster, aves and the creed were thought to be particularly effective in curing disease and countering witchcraft" (207). "Catholicism was illegal," he writes, "and frequently regarded as devilish; it is [therefore] not surprising to find the use of Latin prayers[17] for magical purposes figuring as evidence in accusations of witchcraft and sorcery" (*ibid.*).The use of Latin as counter-magic appealed to a power structure that existed outside the Anglican Church, and, in an anti-papist atmosphere, Latin was aligned with the dark side.

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[17] So strong was the suspicion of Latin as a demonic language that Quaker prophets Katherine Evans and Sarah Cheevers used their captors' Latin against them. They accused the Catholics of "work[ing] night and day with their divinations, incantations and temptations" (13).

If praying in Latin was a sign of demonic collusion,[18] the inability to pray or to recite psalms in English signified the same. Witch-hunters, prosecutors, and gentlemen philosophers usually asked suspects a series of prepared questions, including demands to recite the Lord's Prayer, the Hail Mary, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments in English (Klaits 141). In the earliest published witchcraft tract (1566), proof of Mother Waterhouse's piety, backed up by her regular attendance at church, is refuted by her inability to recite the Lord's Prayer and Hail Mary in English:

> When she was demanded what praier she saide, she aunswered the Lordes prayer, the Ave Maria, and the belefe, & then they demaunded whether in laten or in englyshe, and shee sayde in laten, and they demaunded why she saide it not in englyshe but in laten, seing that it was set out by publike authoritie and according to goddes worde that all men shoulde pray in the englyshe & mother toung that they best understande, and shee sayde that sathan wolde at no tyme suffer her to say it in englyshe, but at all tymes in laten. (A3)

Mother Waterhouse was performing the correct rituals, but her language made them blasphemous; Latin prayers were, by default, addressed to the Devil. Gregory Durston argues that "Waterhouse would have grown up with Latin prayers, and considering the relatively recent ending of Queen Mary's reign, her persisting with the old customs was perhaps, not surprising" (87). Waterhouse, however, "cites her inability to pray in English as a transgression" (Purkiss *Witch,* 155). Rather than admitting that she blasphemed of her own accord, Waterhouse shifts blame onto an intangible foe. She blames her familiar Sathan for forcing her to pray in Latin. She was an unwilling servant following orders.[19]

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[18] Protestants/Anglicans interpreted Latin, which was affiliated with the Catholic Church, as the Devil's language. Sylvia Brown notes that in "New England, Cotton Mather damns Goody Glover by repeatedly emphasizing her corrupt language. While she possesses almost an excess of language, she could not avoid making nonsense of the Lord's Prayer (although as a Roman Catholic she could 'recite her Pater Noster in Latin very readily')" (2001) 200.

Conversely, English is true and godly; the mere sound of this virtuous language pains the Devil. In *The Wonderfull Discoverie of Elizabeth Sawyer a Witch,* Henry Goodcole writes that the Devil taught Sawyer (d. 1621) to pray in Latin. Sawyer's examination clearly indicates public knowledge of her use of Latin and its connection to blasphemy:[20]

> **Quest.**
>
> Did the Divell at any time find you praying when he came unto you, and did not the devil forbid you to pray to Jesus Christ, but to him alone? And did he bid you pray to him the Divell, as he taught you?
>
> **Answ.**
>
> Yes, he found me praying, and he asked of me to whom I prayed, and I answered him, to Jesus Christ, and he charged me then to pray no more to Jesus Christ but to him the Devil, and he the Devil taught me this prayer, Samtihicetur nomentuum.[21] Amen.
>
> **Quest.**
>
> Were you ever taught these Latin words before by any person else, or did you ever heare it before of anybody, or can you say anymore of it?

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[19] Early modern English society was rigidly hierarchical, and servants within that hierarchy, spiritually, socially, and physically attached to their masters, were often verbally, physically, and sexually assaulted. Their bodies were not their own. Within this framework, it is easy to understand how Waterhouse could construct a scenario where, against her will, she was forced to follow the orders of a corrupt master.

[20] Most inhabitants of Northern England were believed to be "ignorant of any religion but the most superstitious remnants of Catholicism, their prayers being 'more like spels and charmes than devotions'" (Harley 115-6). David Harley notes that "Protestants were concerned to undermine traditional customs and beliefs such as the cult of holy wells," and sought to replace superstition with science and a belief in "God's general providence" (115-16).

[21] This garbling of *sanctificetur nomentuum* ("hallowed be thy name") is intriguing on two counts: it locates Sawyer within a Catholic framework, and, by mangling the actual text, it creates a kind of inverse prayer – one appropriate for a demonic petition.

> **Answ.**
>
> No, I was not taught it by anybody else, but by the Divell alone, neither doe I understand the meaning of these words, nor can speak any more Latine words. (C4)

Sawyer is responding the best she can within a very narrow narrative structure. She responds to the cues, but tweaks the focus. She clearly understood the quasi-magical quality of Latin; she may have used this snippet of Latin, like many cunning folk, as a charm. Sawyer's scenario, in which the Devil invades her innocent and pious prayer and compels her to learn Latin to pray to him, shifts blame from her. She assures the examiner that she knows only one prayer, and, truthfully, does not even know its meaning; in Sawyer's argument, ignorance was an excuse.

Women who used Latin prayers were not the only blasphemers to be condemned for their imperfect recitations. Uncontrolled, imperfect, or illicit speech acts also cast doubt on a woman's moral rectitude. Women were supposed to reproduce the dominant discourse without deviation, moderation, or addition. That Temperance Lloyd only "imperfectly perform[ed]" the Lord's Prayer and "her Creed," for example, won her numerous concerned exhortations from Mr. Ogilby (*A True* 19). If good Christians had a basic knowledge of, and were able to recite, common prayers in English, then ignorant recitation condemned women as lacking true Christian understanding and internalization of scripture.[22]

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[22] Comprehension and reproduction of scripture takes on a different and complex meaning in early modern England. Quakerism promoted the active and almost physical understanding of the scriptures, via an internalization of Christ within the souls of believers. This inner light or seed provided a personal and intimate connection with God. Puritanism held that the "spirit was present to help the godly understand, internalize, and reproduce the gospel in their own lives, whenever they heard a sermon or read the Bible" (Brown 189).

Constructing Confessions

The witch's most powerful words appeared, not as a part of her malefic speech acts, but as a part of her confession.[23] Women were constructed linguistically as witches from the outside in, through examinations, confessions, and publications. Despite the nature of the crime, the court still needed proof of the witch's actions and motives, eyewitness testimony to her speech acts, and character witnesses to testify to her wickedness. In "Understanding Witchcraft?," Marion Gibson writes that "victims see what they expect to see after a quarrel with the witch, and their perception thus adjusts reality even before their articulation of the incident in words further shapes their experience into a neat, coherent tale" (46). The woman becomes a witch because the witness expects her to be, and thus reads her actions accordingly. The witness' testimony, in moving from recollection to narrative, in turn firmly locates the accused as witch; her actions are read by all subsequent participants (examiners, judges, even the woman herself) from within this rigid frame.

In *Excitable Speech* (1997), Butler considers how hate speech functions as an illocutionary act. It is not merely a representation of violence, but is itself an act of violence. She argues that

> Austin's view that the illocutionary speech act is conditioned by its conventional, that is, "ritual" or "ceremonial" dimension, finds a counterpart in Althusser's insistence that ideology has a "ritual" form, and that "ritual" constitutes "the material existence of an ideological apparatus." (25)

Butler locates hate speech within this framework, proposing that hate speech is illocutionary, "that it produces the subject in a position of subordination, [and] approximates the view that the subject is interpellated by an anterior voice, one that exercises a ritual form" (26). Butler later goes on to argue that "the state produces hate speech," qualifying her assertion by noting that "without the state's ratification," the category would not exist (*ibid.*). The act of calling someone a witch is itself an act of hate speech, a discursive act the state ratified with the 1563 and 1604 Witchcraft Acts. Moreover, the numerous linguistic tests used by witch finders, interrogators, and judges all represent the kind of rituals Austin locates within the context of illocutionary acts, and which Louis Althusser sees as necessarily functioning within ideologies.

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[23] Marion Gibson spends considerable time puzzling out how the records we have for witchcraft tracts and trials were originally produced. Also, see Walter Stephens' *Demon Lovers* (2002), 1-13 and Clive Holmes' "Women: Witches and Witnesses" (2002), 303-21.

The sixteenth- and seventeenth-century English legal system used a standard script in witchcraft testimonies, usually composed of several leading questions designed to produce a standard confession. Klaits argues that this practice, "inherited from the medieval Inquisition and encouraged in the *Malleus Maleficarum*," created documents which "betray their origin in the prepared interrogatories of the questioners" (141). By forcing the witch to speak within very narrow and contrived parameters, her interrogators were likely to produce the desired confession. These parameters, designed to affirm the existence of witches and the legal system's control of them, contained, then exterminated, this social threat.[24] Forced to answer leading questions, numerous women implicated themselves and those around them, regardless of how carefully they worded their responses. In controlling the medium, the message is controlled; by controlling her language, the legal system could control the witch.[25] Without her linguistic power, the witch becomes non-threatening and manageable. The confession narrative takes the witch, whose power lies in her mysterious and preternatural ability to use language, and demands that she speak within a grid designed to entrap her. Frances E. Dolan offers a more conciliatory vision of the witch's confession. In "presenting the convicts' remarks," published accounts of witchcraft "can be seen as a kind of collaboration between author and subject" (10-11). Jackson also foregrounds the confession as a moment of agency, further suggesting that "the women accused, in their confessions, were judging themselves," and "some accused witches were, within their court confessions, contextualizing their own insecurities and experiences within the linguistic framework of demonology" (63). The confession is not just a moment of victimization, it is also a moment of self-actualization.

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[24] Klaits goes on to argue that, although torture was forbidden in England, "the authorities' ideas about witches were strongly influenced by continental writers who drew their evidence from confessions extracted by torture" (128); English authorities may not have used torture to extract confessions, but they were essentially trained by those who did. Richard Deacon writes that Matthew Hopkins' interrogation techniques are "familiar in our own age to the Jew-hunting craze of Nazi Germany and the Liquidation squads of Stalinist Russia" (108). He argues that this technique is "apparent from the evidence and confessions made by suspected witches: the vital question was: 'from whom did you obtain your imps?' If a suspected witch could be made to confess that she received her imps from such and such a person, this could pave the way to a further prosecution" (108). Admitting to having a familiar was akin to admitting to being a witch; torture was not necessary after this admission.

Women provide us with crucial information on how they fought to establish their own stories and identities, through the ways they negotiated standardized examinations. The variety of their responses, the length of time they maintain their innocence, and their last-minute confessions or recantations illustrate how they continue to negotiate language to define themselves, rather than simply submitting to legal definition.[26]

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[25] Mass production and distribution of witchcraft narratives reinforced the continued existence and threat of witches. Marshall McLuhan wrote "the medium is the message" in 1964, as an attempt to theorize how the way that information is delivered actually influences its meaning (7). He argues that "the 'message' of any medium or technology is the change of scale or pace or pattern that it introduces into human affairs" (8). Witches were real because publications about them said they were real; in publishing witchcraft tracts, the authors mapped witches onto the landscape. As these tracts continued to proliferate, eager readers discovered witches around them. Although prosecutions for witchcraft declined by the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, with a preponderance of witches mentioned during the 1640s, "the witch proved to be a figure so labile that diverse and even opposed meanings could attach to her, making her immensely useful to the factious polemicists of the Civil War era" (Purkiss, "Desire," 106). Royalists and Parliamentarians published propaganda that used the trope of the witch against one another. These transparent political gestures effectively associate the witch with whomever one wants to demonize, and affirm her place in public consciousness; anyone aligned with the opposite side could be a witch.

[26] While leading a panel session at the 2003 Attending to Early Modern Women conference in Maryland, Kathryn Burns and Megan Matchinske debated how we can find the "truths" in both the private diary's truth, and the "apparently public kind of 'structured' truth, as in the Peruvian exclamaci—n—a formalized outburst in the notarial record that literally voice[s] protest or refusal." In this panel session ("Truth in the Telling: Gendering Structures of Authenticity in Early Modern and Academic Contexts"), the group also discussed how we could find women's truths in structured legal documents

Although the legal system could prosecute women by discovering or manufacturing the necessary proof in victim testimony or witness statements, the witch's own confession, free or coerced, provided the final ingredient that ensured a legal and moral victory.[27] Some women raged against their interpellation, however, and refused to define themselves as witches, or to accept an external definition. Others, when made to testify, implicated themselves; witches' words had the potential to harm the witch as easily as anyone else.

"Inwardly pricked": Gallows-Confessions

Jim Sharpe argues that "it was desirable that the condemned witch, like other convicted felons, should 'make a good end', and die penitently and with dignity" (297); a woman who proclaimed her innocence was, in the shadow of the noose, again pressured to confess. The medium of the gallows-confession was the message: the legal system punishes wicked, murderous, and blasphemous women. However, on this stage, women also reconstructed themselves. Considering the nature of both the actor and the stage, these gallows-confessions produce some startlingly sympathetic performances of devotion and repentance. Joan Peterson, the infamous witch of Wapping, was accused and prosecuted in 1652 for helping to kill Lady Powell by poisoning. Although Peterson "renounced all witchcraft," she confessed to the "honorable bench that she administered not anything to the lady but what was comfortable and nourishing" (*Tryall* 8). Her performance condemned her persecutors for sending an honest Christian woman to her death. Conversely, tried alongside Joan Cony and Joan Prentice in 1589, Joan Upney admitted to sending one of her familiar toads to pinch and suck John Harrolde's wife until she died, and to sending another to torment Richard Foster's wife. Upney's vague and timid confessions have been read as a sign that she was "a trifle feeble-minded," unable to "grasp the nature of the charges laid against her"; nonetheless, she performed a spectacular spiritual 180-degree turn at the gallows (Rosen 182, Purkiss 146). Although the narrator laments Upney's lukewarm repetition of prayers, a 'note' appended to the end of the pamphlet proclaims an eleventh-hour triumph of Christian guilt: Upney cried out that "the devill had deceived her, the devill had deceived her" (B3).

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[27] Gilbert Geis and Ivan Bunn argue, in *A Trial of Witches* (1997), that although continental witchcraft trials demanded a confession as proof of maleficium, the English system could convict on circumstantial evidence, rendering the confession satisfying, but not crucial to securing a conviction (54).

Jackson proposes that the witch, "with a strong input from others, constructed what ultimately became a written testimony, so that the text would end up constructing her, both in terms of her identity within the community and of self-identity" (70). The gallows-confession, her last performance, was also the witch's last opportunity to construct herself. The same kind of illocutionary act which condemned a woman as a witch also suggested that "speech can be 'returned to its speaker' in a different form, that it can be cited against its originary purposes, and perform a reversal of effects" (14). This can happen, Butler argues, but "the meanings the speech act acquires and the effects it performs must exceed those by which it was intended, and the contexts it assumes must be not quite the same as the one in which it originates" (15). It is here we can locate the spectacular gallows-confession. It is, in many cases, a re-appropriation of illocutionary agency. For Peterson and Upney, the gallows-confession enabled them to restage the accusation of witchcraft with an illocutionary act that outperformed the accusation; they undertook to transform themselves back into Christians.

In this last attempt at discursive magic, the confession becomes an illocutionary act which intentionally alters reality; in confessing, the accused took discursive agency back from her accusers and persecutors. In her last discursive act, the witch publicly refashioned herself. After capture, imprisonment, and hours of examinations, some women may have begun believing the witch-hype; moments before execution, and feeling hellfire licking their ankles, they confessed to save their souls.[28] Conversely, others might have sought to undo the exercise that made them into a witch, using the only other identity available — repentant Christian. Joan Peterson and Joan Upney, convicted as witches and facing their imminent demise, used the gallows-confession as the last stage upon which they could claim and construct their own identities. Amid swinging ropes and last-instant examiners, the final spells of some sixteenth- and seventeenth-century English witches involved turning themselves into simulacra of Christian repentance and devotion.

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[28] For more information on gallows-confessions, see Sharpe's "Women, Witchcraft and the Legal Process" (2002), 289-302

A brief interrogation of Peterson's case illustrates the tension between how the witness, interrogator, and writer saw the witch, and how she constructed herself. Different authors, within the pamphlets collected and published under the title *The Witch of Wapping*, recount evidence used against Peterson. In each pamphlet, however, she refuses to be condemned as a witch; she was a cunning-woman, and a good one at that. She maintains her innocence of malefic magic or murder, and defines herself as a healer who has helped far more than she has hurt. After her death, her contemporaries continued to battle textually over who and what Peterson was. Clearly, despite the design to control witchcraft through standardizing its definition, these definitions were neither unquestioned nor universal.

The anonymous author of *The Witch of Wapping*[29] writes that Peterson "had done much mischief, so there were divers that came to witness that she had cured them of several diseases" (3). The tract begins with its own negotiation:

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[29] Stories about Peterson are published in at least two different venues: *The Witch of Wapping* and *The Tryall and Examination of Mrs. Joan Peterson*. *The Witch of Wapping* is the first, consisting of three tracts and a medical report published together. Three of these concern Peterson; the other describes the case of Prudence Lee. *The Tryall* is a one-page tract appended to a six-page description of how Giles Fenderlin killed his common-law wife through witchcraft. Fenderlin, along with two other soldiers, procured a five-year contract for devilish protection from a Jesuit. Pleased by the results, Fenderlin went back and signed, in blood, a fourteen-year contract with the Devil, facilitated again by the Jesuit priest. As a signing bonus, he received a ring that would help him find treasure. Finding treasure is a well-known part of the cunning-trade, and magic rings are associated with magic more than witchcraft. It could be that the author of this tract was seeking to blur the lines between cunning-folk, magicians, and witches in the way he recounts the two narratives, and appends Peterson's story to the end. Likely, however, he, or the printer, had an extra page and decided to include Peterson's story as filler.

> There are two sorts of Witches, which the Vulgar people distinguish by the names of the Good Witch (I wonder how that can be,) and the Bad; by reason, when one bewitcheth a party, the other unwitcheth him again: Now this Joan Peterson, it should seem, was both. (3)

The author notes that Peterson cured incurable headaches and helped the cow-keeper's wife identify the woman who had bewitched a cow.[30] Good magic[31] might have kept Peterson out of court for years; however, unpaid and irate, Peterson removed the cure she gave Christopher Wilson, and he promptly became sicker than before.[32] Her aggressive threat to Wilson, that he would have been "better [if] you had given me my money for you shall be ten times worse than ever you were," and his subsequent illness were enough to prove she had the same powers as a 'bad' witch (12).[33] The tenor of Peterson's threat was interpreted as proof that Wilson's sickness was not merely a relapse, but a deliberate act of malefic revenge.

The third tract in the 1652 *Witch of Wapping* collection, "A Declaration in Answer to several lying Pamphlets concerning the Witch of Wapping," contains an anonymous conspiracy theory, positing how and why Peterson was framed for Wilson's illness and

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[30] The narrator, however, dedicates a substantial portion of the tract to relating the bizarre and negative accusations brought up at the trial. Peterson's nightly discourses with a squirrel, a black dog snuggling into her armpit, and a mysterious rocking cradle of a child she supposedly bewitched (watched over as a black cat) are all cited as proof against her. Likely, she was suspected of bewitching the child because she was the only woman the village assumed to have had the power to do so.

[31] In *Cunning-folk*, Davies admits that she was "one of the few practitioners to be hanged" as a witch (12).

[32] According to Davies, cunning-folk often had trouble collecting debts; and Wilson's reneging on his debt and Peterson's supposed threat gave the court her motive. Wilson's relapse gave them the crime (ibid.).

[33] According to the tract, the recurrence of Wilson's illness held substantial weight in proving the malefic power of Peterson's words:

> One Christopher Wilson being very sick and weak came to this Peterson and agreed with her for a certain sum of money to cure him, which she undertook to do, and in a short time cured him, but demanding her money of him, he denied to pay her so much as they had agreed for, whereupon she burst out into these speeches; you had [been] better [if] you had given me my money for you shall be ten times worse than ever you were; and very suddenly after he fell into very strange fits, and for twelve hours together would rage and rave like a mad man, and afterwards for twelve hours more would slabber out his tongue, and walk up and down like a meer changeling; in this condition he remained certain days, and then he fell very sick, and at this instant (if he be not dead) languisheth away, and rots as he lies. (Wapping 4-5).

Wilson's relapse said more about Peterson's power than it did about Wilson's own illness.

Lady Powell's death.[34] Peterson had some character witnesses testify for her; however, some were frightened off, and still more were offered money to testify against her. The people who testified for her, and who believed that she had helped them with white or folk magic, likewise provided Peterson with credible witnesses to her power. Her last confession reads as follows:

> she answered that she had already confessed before the Bench, all she had to confesse; that she had made her peace with God; and therefore desired to dye in quiet, for now she was to appeare before God who presently would Judge her, and that God was witnes, that she dyed Innocently, and was in no wise guilty of what was laid to her charge, and that she hoped he would freely forgive her all her sins, and to this effect she still replyed to his frequent importunities: And having gone to prayers, she shewed her selfe very attentive and penitent, and after Prayer called to sing the 25th Psalm, which she performed very Christianly and cheerfully, and so died, &c. (16)

In her final moments, at least as the anonymous author of the third tract describes them, she performed the Christian rituals that most witches are (supposedly) unable to do without having confessed their previous diabolic allegiance. She confessed that she had sinned, but refused to give her prosecutors the witchcraft confession they wanted.

Peterson's case illustrates the problem of imposing definitions: contemporaries remained undecided on whether Peterson was a witch at all. Unlike the previous tract, this has a stake in making Peterson into a martyr. Within the same publication, two different voices take opposing views on what constitutes witchcraft, and on Peterson's identity as a witch. Regardless of authorial intent, Peterson herself had a stake in how she performed her own funerary rites. If one reads Peterson's final confession as a perlocutionary utterance, she can be read as taking advantage of having the last word, defining herself as a Christian cunning-woman (itself an assertion of the non-exclusivity of these two terms). Further, her final stand had lasting effects outside the utterance itself. By refusing to define herself as a witch, and by claiming to be an innocent and penitent Christian, Peterson created enough unease that the debate over her guilt or innocence, and even the fairness of the judicial system, continued past her gallows performance, and into the textual debate played out in the tracts which recount her case. Those who chose, like Peterson, to fight their interpellation, may not have escaped the prison, but they shook its bars enough to draw attention to its unstable foundation.

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[34] Abraham Vandenbemde and his associates evidently offered Anne Hook and Peterson bribes to accuse Mrs. Anne Levingston (the heir to Lady Powell's estate) of murdering her. Peterson refused to become part of the plot, and subsequently became its scapegoat. Her home and body were searched for signs of witchcraft, but nothing was found in either case. Peterson, who produced a list of reputable witnesses, including doctors who testified to Lady Powell's natural death of "Dropsie, the Scurvey, and the yellow Jaundies," was cleared of charges relating to Powell's death (140). This last pamphlet reveals that Wilson never actually complained about Peterson. The tract recounts that "many other witnesses were produced, but could only swear to generallities, hear-says, and most absurd and ridiculous impertinences" (14-15). The testimony against Peterson with regard to Wilson came from "Margaret Austin (who had formerly been a wandering person, but was in charity taken up, relieved, and kept, by the said Jone Peterson, until shee perceived that the said Austin had purloined some other goods out of her house" (14). Here Austin, Peterson's main accuser, is constructed with the stereotypical aspects of a witch; she is an untrustworthy, vengeful vagrant.

Many women, unable to maintain their innocence, went to the gallows implicating themselves. By confessing and praying for God's forgiveness, even for crimes they did not commit, these women reestablished themselves as wayward Christians, rather than servants of Satan. Upney's narrative is published along with Cony and Prentice's in *The Apprehension and Confession of Three Notorious Witches* (1589). Short and frank, Upney's confession recounts standard details about her familiars[35] before deviating from the norm. Upney also "confesse[d] she ranne away,[36] because she heard John Harrolde and Richard Foster say she was a witch, and such other woordes" (B). By stating that she fled, she demonstrated a clear comprehension of how a witchcraft accusation, an act of hate speech, was akin to a death sentence. Upney admitted to the minimum amount of information possible, avoiding superfluous details that could be interpreted as confessions of more malefic acts.

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[35] Upney admitted to having familiar toads, but refused to admit that her toads ever hurt anyone on her orders; she constructed her familiars as independent operators coincidentally living with her.
[36] Upney appears to be the only accused women to confess to fleeing from home when the accusation was made.

After their conviction, Upney, Cony, and Prentice were "convayed from the Barre backe againe to Prison, where they had not stayed above two howers, but the officers prepared them-selves to conduct them to the place of execution" (B3). According to the narrator,

> one Maister Ward a learned devine, beeing desired by the Justices, did exhort these wicked women to repentance, And perswaded them that they would shewe unto the people the trueth of their wickednes, and to call upon God for mercy with penitent hartes. And to aske pardon at his hands for the same: some fewe prayers they saide after the precher, but little els: more then this, that they had deserved to dye, in committing those wicked sinnes: and so tooke their deathes patiently. (*ibid.*)

That Master Ward approached Upney, Prentice, and Cony illustrates the state's desire to control the way these women were defined, right up to, and even after, their deaths. Ward sought to reincorporate these women into Christian ideology; by doing so at the gallows, he meant to illustrate the power of the state to transform the wicked into the repentant — condemning witches, but burying Christians. The women refused to give the preacher the dramatic gallows-side repentance he desired. The document, however, concludes with the author's "Note," stating that Upney,

> being inwardlye pricked and having some inward feeling in conscience cryed out saying: that she had greevously sinned, that the devill had deceived her, the devill had deceived her, and that she had twice given her soule to the Devill, yet by the meanes of Gods spirite woorking in her, and the paines which Maister ward tooke with her, she seemed very sorry for ye same, and died very penitent, asking God & the world forgivenes, even to ye last gaspe, for her wicked and detestable life. (B3-4)

God and Master Ward are given equal credit in saving Upney's soul. How heavily Upney's conscience weighed on her cannot be known; however, she seems to have made the last-minute confession needed to incorporate herself back into the Christian system of forgiven, penitent sinners. Upney's self-reinvention is based on two important modes: preexisting ritual and linguistic re-appropriation. As argued earlier, both ideology and language exist within ritual. At the gallows, ritual is based on confession, repentance, and asking for forgiveness and granting it to the executioner, all of which are behabitives (because they are based on understandings of social behavior) and illocutionary acts (which do and say simultaneously). Upney had already been through the ritual, and although her participation was considered lackluster, she did pick up verbal cues from Ward's earlier attempts. Upney, however, accepted as much responsibility as she deferred. Although she admitted that she had twice sold her soul to the Devil, she first emphatically declares — twice — that she had been deceived. According to the narrator, she continued with the ritual, dying penitent and asking for forgiveness. Upney's final confession is read as a triumph of Christian guilt, a performance made possible by the "meanes of Gods spirite woorking in her, and the paines which Maister ward tooke with her" (B4); her confession is celebrated because it conforms to the ritual already laid out as both acceptable and compulsory.

However, what the narrator fails to note is Upney's own participation in her performance. Upney was not a passive vessel acted upon by God and the state; she actively and linguistically re-appropriated her own subjectivity by embracing her title as witch, and, as Butler proposes, reversing its effects (14). When Upney confessed that she was a witch, she took back the word; by making it her own, Upney not only defined herself as a witch, but made her experience a simulacrum for the Christian journey. Having passed through the greatest of sins, Upney could posit that she was uniquely worthy to receive grace. At the gallows, moments before her execution, Upney fashioned herself into a repentant sinner.

Not all women were interested in reincorporating themselves into Christian discourse. Although some confessed, they did so impenitently, denying the self-righteous legal system its role in saving another sinner. Edmond Bower, author of *Dr Lamb Revived* (1653),[37] claimed to have been present for Anne Styles' deposition, and to have twice interviewed Bodenham,[38] servant and protégée to the infamous Dr. Lamb. Styles accused Bodenham of influencing her to sign a pact with the Devil.[39] According to Styles, Bodenham "earnestly desired [Styles] to live with her, and told her, that if she would do so, she would teach her to doe as she did, and that she should never be taken" (13). Bodenham transformed herself into a cat[40] to prove her abilities, terrifying Styles in the process. Sensing she had gone too far, Bodenham told Styles that she "must seal unto her body and blood not to discover her; which she promising to doe . . . made a Circle . . . called Beelzebub, Tormentor, Lucifer, and Satan appeare, then appeared two Spirits[41] in the likenesse of great Boy . . . who [with] the Witch" pricked Styles' finger and filled a pen with the blood (10). While all their hands were together,

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[37] Accounts of Bodenham found in *Dr Lamb's Darlings* and Nathaniel Crouch's *Kingdom of Darkeness* appear to be cribbed from Bower's account.

[38] Bodenham's list of talents, however, is analogous to that of a cunning-woman; this was, in all likelihood, her trade:

> She then said, she could cure Diseases by Charms and Spels, and had prayers that would doe so likewise; and they could cure such Diseases as the best Doctors could not doe; she could discover stolen goods, and shew any one the Theef that had them, in a glasse; and that she could raise Spirits by reading in her Books. (Bower 28-9)

[39] Styles had been to see Bodenham on more than one occasion, for standard cunning-business on behalf of her employers: finding a lost spoon, locating money, and so on. Bodenham was soon providing the family with charms, and predicting plots, including a plot to poison Mistress Goddard. The family fired Styles, telling her to "goe away and shift for her selfe, otherwise they supposed that she should be examined before some Justice, and so there might be some trouble and disgrace." Styles blames her association with Bodenham for eventually leading to her termination (Bower 13).

[40] *Dr Lamb's Darlings* contains a list, in large, bold type, of all the things Bodenham could transform herself into: "a mastiff dog, a back lyon, a white bear, a wolfe, a monkey, a horse, a bull and a calf" (7). Joseph Glanville calls Bodenham a "Præstigiator, an Imposer on the sight" (22). He writes that "when Anne Bodenham transformed herself before Anne Styles into the shape of a great Cat; Anne Styles her sight was so imposed upon, that the thing to her seemed to be done, though her eyes were onely deluded. But such a delusion certainly cannot be performed without confederacy with evil Spirits" (23). Even though Bodenham did not have the power to transform herself, only a powerful witch would have the influence to seek the aid of spirits in such a deception. A spell like this is known, in current witchcraft terminology, as a "glamour."

[41] Glanville notes that Bodenham, like the Witch of Endor, was able to converse with spirits. He claims to have it on good authority from a friend, a "worthy and Learned Friend of mine, That [Bodenham asserted that] these Spirits, such as she had, were good Spirits, and would do a man all good offices all the days of his life" (43).

> the Witch said Amen, and made the Maid say Amen, and the Spirits said Amen, Amen; and the Spirits hand did feel cold to the Maid as it touched her hand, when the Witches hand and hers were together writing; and then the Spirit gave a piece of Silver (which he first bit) to the Witch, who gave it to the Maid, and also stuck two Pins in the Maids head-cloathes, and bid her keep them, and bid her be gone. (10)

Throughout their relationship, Bodenham used ceremonies to impressed Styles; anxious that Styles remain mute about her magical aptitude, Bodenham, no doubt, played up the drama. Styles, emotionally vulnerable after losing her job, and impressed by Bodenham's ritual, believed that the binding spell[42] represented a contract with the Devil.

Styles, trembling and weeping, confessed to Mr. Chandler, Mistress Goddard's son-in-law, her long-time acquaintance with Bodenham and her own "contract" with the Devil (13). She soon began having fits; Bodenham was imprisoned after Styles' fits quickly worsened. Bodenham did not see herself as a damned witch and when brought before Styles, who fell into a coma-like trance,[43] she cried out "the wicked people will scratch and tear me" (20). However, Bodenham refused to be held culpable for Styles' crazed behavior and "broke forth into bitter speeches against the Maid; saying, Ah Whore! ah Devil! she hath belyed me, and the Devils will tear her for it, I will warrant you" (21). From Bodenham's vantage point, Styles *was* a whore, a liar, and a slanderer; Styles' hysteria, not any wrongdoing on Bodenham's part, would damn them both. Bodenham, desperate to be alone with Styles, confessed to the eager Bower, "I have cured hundreds, and beleeve can cure this Maid also, if you will let me alone with her" (24). I like to think she would have slapped some sense into Styles. She told Bower her treatment would have been good prayers to Jupiter[44] and a spell to him to be hung around Styles' neck.[45]

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[42] The pins, in this case, were used to bind Styles to her pact of silence. Mr. Chandler's tossing of the pins and money into the fire demonstrates his knowledge of basic object counter-magic. For more information on the use of fire in object counter-magic, see Purkiss' *The Witch*, 121-23.

[43] Increase Mather used Bodenham to prove a point in A Further Account of the Tryals of the New England Witches (1693), that the "Laws and Customs of the Kingdom of darkness, are not always and in all places the same" (25). Mather writes,

> that horrid Witch of Salisbury, Anne Bodenham who had been Servant to the Notorious Conjurer Dr. Lamb, could not bear the sight of one that was Bewitched by her. As soon as ever she saw the Afflicted Person, she ran about shrieking, and crying, and roaring after a hideous manner, that the Devil would tear her in pieces, if that person came near her. And whilst the Witch was in such Torment, the Bewitched was at ease. (25)

This reading glosses over the very important fact that Bodenham's primary fear was of the rabble gathered at Styles' bedside, and its potential for violence against her. Further, it ignores the report that Bodenham was in Styles' presence for over three hours without any notable show of distress, and even offered to heal her. Mather plays fast and loose with other published facts about the case. When Styles was "Bewitched," she was not exactly "at ease"; although she woke up rested, her sleep was involuntary and unnatural, and those gathered could not wake her from it.

Bodenham believed that she had been performing a necessary role in her community. Much like Peterson, she saw herself as a healer and a facilitator, describing herself as a talented, learned woman whose impressive tools had enabled her to make a living helping people: "and no body ever gave her an ill word for all her paines, but alwayes called her Mrs Boddenham, and was never accounted a Witch but by reason of this wicked Maid now in prison, and then fell a cursing of and reviling at the Maid extremely" (27). Bodenham continued cursing Styles, calling her a whore and a rascal, and predicted that both God and the Devil would punish her (33, 37).

Bodenham refused to admit any wrongdoing, adamantly blaming Styles for the entire scandal, "and further said, that before she had been put to this shame, she would have given Forty pounds for the saving her life; but now she would not live if she should, but was resolved to be hanged, and her earnest desire was that she might be buryed under the gallows" (34). Knowing there was no way to undo the events Styles had set in motion, Bodenham resigned herself to die, rather than live in a world that would persecute a woman to whom it had once turned for help.

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[44] Reference to Bodenham's prayer to Jupiter appears in Henry More's *Enthusiasmus triumphatus* (1656) as a comment about pagan worship: "And why might they not pray to them as Anne Bodenham the Witch did to the Planet Jupiter for the curing diseases, if they have so much power and knowledge as to generate men here below, and conferre gifts upon them?" (48).

[45] Bodenham willingly joined in prayer with the group, but did not want Styles awakened. She might have feared that the devil who possessed Styles' body would be exorcised and come for her. When Bodenham left, Styles dutifully awoke, having slept the sleep of angels. Bodenham, however, began to

> roar and cry out, Oh the Devill, the Devill, the Devill will tear me in pieces, running from one corner of the room to the other, shaking and 'ratling her fetters, striking with a stick in her hand those that were in the room, Prisoners and others; crying out, and cursing the Maid, saying, Oh this Whore will be the death of me, she will hang me, and I shall be killed and torn in pieces. (27)

Bodenham, who is depicted throughout this narrative, and those of all contemporary and current accounts, as being resigned to her death, here appears to be genuinely terrified and uncontrollably angry. Bodenham was not tormented by devils; her rage here seems to be true resentment that she was going to be sent to the gallows over a simple maid's story. Such bellowing wrath likely had the added benefit of frightening the prisoners, guards, and crowd away from harassing her.

Bodenham's death is the predominant focus of critical attention. She steadfastly refused to go to the gallows giving *hoi polloi* the show of a moral lesson against the evils of witchcraft. Rather, she raged against the machine, calling for drink and cursing those who would not give it to her, a feisty inversion of Christ's call for drink while on the cross. Bodenham performed her death march as a martyr to the stupidity around her, attempting to ascend the stairs and jump from the gallows herself. Bodenham twice refused to confess to the narrator, who pompously thought he might extract the confession the court could not. Bodenham also refused the prayers of the hypocrites who came to gawk at her execution, justifying their hunger for spectacle by praying for her soul. She "had as many prayers already as she intended, and desired to have, but cursed those that detained her from her death, and was importunate to goe up the Ladder" (39). To the last minute, Bodenham refused to incorporate herself into the standard plot, or deliver the standard lines; when the "Executioner stayed her, and desired her to forgive him: She replyed, Forgive thee? A pox on thee, turn me off; which were the last words she spake" (36).

Labeled a witch, Bodenham continually fought the definition which Styles, Bower, and the legal system imposed on her. She railed against the injustice of the accusation, rained curses on her accusers, and died refusing to confess to a crime she never committed.[46] Purkiss suggests that "Bodenham's case shows just how weak and ineffectual the notion of pact witchcraft was as a means of controlling women and rendering them quiescent, for first she exploits elite discourses of conjuration and then summarily rejects godly interpretations of her actions" (153). Bodenham embraced the power, prestige, and financial security that her position as a cunning woman afforded her; she would not allow herself to be refigured as a common witch or a groveling penitent. She denied those definitions at every turn, and continually asserted and reasserted that Styles was at fault for the horrible miscarriage of justice taking place. By refusing to confess and by continually calling down curses, Bodenham never relinquished the power which had implicated her in the first place. Her stubborn refusal to play the confession game did not cost her life — Bodenham would have been executed regardless of what last-minute admission she tossed out — but it did save her identity.

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[46] Francis Hutchinson, in *An Historical Essay Concerning Witchcraft* (1720), has only one mention of Bodenham's life and death: "Anne Bodenham, Dr. Lamb's Maid, executed at Salisbury, declaring her Innocence" (61).

Moving towards Prophecy

In investigating cases of early modern English witches, we can see how easily language became heterodox, and how earnestly women fought the external forces which sought to define them. The language itself was benign; Latin remained part of an educated discourse, and by the middle of the seventeenth century, sectarians and parliamentarians cursed openly in the streets without fear of penalty. Nevertheless, all language could take on malefic power, depending on its articulation; because so few women accused of witchcraft had access to texts or the skill to read or write, their spoken words were excercitives, changing reality by being spoken. Mother Waterhouse or Elizabeth Sawyer's knowledge of Latin was in itself not a crime, yet, by articulating Latin, they summoned all the anti-papist cultural cachet which went with it. They were ungodly, not only because they had met the Devil, but because they no longer prayed to God in English. Cursing operated in much the same way; innumerable people swore and cursed, but when witches did so, they had motives and a measurable success rate. While the godly kept their mouths closed, the wicked opened theirs often enough to develop a reputation for it.

Witches were successful cursers because they were perceived as changing the world around them. Witches were not, however, immune to becoming the objects of a similar linguistic fashioning. Women like Upney not only confessed, but performed a stunning display of Christian guilt and repentance. Although Upney's confessionary motive remains unknown, whether she gave in to external pressure and internalized the ritual, or chose to perform an illocutionary act as a final attempt to define herself, we know nonetheless that she literally had the last word. Peterson and Bodenham fought their signification as witches. In refusing the illocutionary meaning of her sentencing, Peterson proposed, instead, a reading that emphasized both her discursive power and her Christianity. Peterson's gallows performance left her critics questioning not only if an innocent woman had been executed, but also how to differentiate between a Christian woman with God-given power and a witch working by malefic machinations. In refusing to play the confessional game of a system which would execute her regardless, Bodenham denied her persecutors the final power to construct her. She refused them an easy sleep that night, and died with a curse on her lips for them.

Women accused of witchcraft in early modern England found themselves unwillingly and uncomfortably in the public eye for participating in forbidden, scandalous, blasphemous, and malefic language. Although this study looks at how women were able to negotiate self-representation within court examinations and confessions, their vulnerability and physical powerlessness cannot be forgotten. As clever, witty, or insistent as these women were, they were ultimately unsuccessful; their discursive power plays, above all, concluded in executions.

How does understanding witchcraft help us understand prophecy? Primarily, language represents an intriguing site of conflation between these two supposedly contrary spiritual stances. Religious sects often accused other sects of harboring witches. Unappreciative audiences, offended peers, and zealous figures in religious movements and the government might likewise seek to silence unruly women with the gag of witchcraft.

The prophet could very easily look and sound like a witch. Yet witches, especially cunning-women, were consulted on oracular and social problems. They functioned as on-call prophets, who counseled and cured much as actual prophets did on their missionary journeys and on the page. Barbara Rosen attempts to clarify the difference between prophecy and witchcraft, through her analysis of prayer and magic in *Witchcraft in England* (1969):

> Prayer is petitionary, and the petitioner submits his request to the judgment of a god; a spell sets up man's will as arbiter, and tries to compel fulfillment of a request. In form there may be little to differentiate a spell from a prayer — but a spell is without humility and felt to be free of the limitations imposed by the religious system. For this reason, prayers of past religions often become spells and even the mass could have its power stolen for magic. (4)[47]

The person praying is necessarily asking for God's aid, guidance, solace, or acceptance of atonement. She is always a humble subordinate, whose agency lies only in her ability to ask for help; the real power is in God's willingness to listen to and do something about her request. The practitioner of magic, on the other hand, whether practicing low magic or high, witchcraft or necromancy, claims to be able to make things happen through sympathetic magic, familiars, and spirits. By extending this theory to prophets and witches, it would seem that prophecy is a passive act, whereas witchcraft is active. Although this dualism may work as an overarching hypothesis, the question of agency in prophecy and witchcraft is more complicated. Did the prophet's obvious education allow her to better negotiate her stance? The women we are studying were separated, chronologically, politically, and educationally. Yet those unable to write their own texts were familiar enough with the scriptures to dictate one which could pass, with edits, as erudite. Although the prophet's education factored in heavily in explaining her rhetorical skills to her contemporaries, her education was also the force that gave her the moxie to put herself in the public eye, where she risked being identified as a witch. Many visionary women[48] were willing to face social, legal, and physical danger to promote or defend their positions as God's representatives and elect speakers. Similarly, the witch may not have intended to become a public figure, but her alleged rhetorical power brought her into the public's gaze. Although the prophet's education may have allowed her better to represent herself, the spotlight on her, as on any woman within its glare, was aimed at exposing her — and in that way, she was always as vulnerable as her dark sister.

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[47] "Hocus-pocus" (likely a degradation of the liturgical phrase *hoc est enim corpus meum,* or "this is my body") has come to signify the use of Latin prayer, but particularly the magic of transubstantiation, as a kind of juggling, deception, or trickery. Davies argues that the word "abracadabra" also had potent magical power, and was used by the Romans as a written charm against disease (150). Davies notes that references to "abracadabra" appear in Agrippa's third book, and in Reginald Scot (*ibid*).

Dangerous Words: Tub Preaching and the End of Days

Although prophets did not share a single agenda in writing or witnessing, many felt the millenarian impulse to speak. Even with authority stemming from God, timing was crucial; this was the end of times, of which God had spoken:

> And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:

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[48] As explored in the introduction, this dissertation divides the prophetic modes used by most published prophets in seventeenth-century England into three categories: the ecstatic, the didactic, and the oracular. The differences among these forms seems to divide, rather than elide them; the issue of authorship for an ecstatic text, for example, is more slippery than for a didactic one. The ecstatic text was often transcribed, edited, assembled, and produced with a foreword and afterword by a male editor, whereas the didactic text was a call to arms or condemnation, addressed to the people of England or to Cromwell, composed and submitted for publication by the author herself. Oracular texts, although they might contain elements of the previous two forms, had the addition feature of predicting the future. Although female prophetic voices came to the public in a variety of forms, the prophet's godliness was the basis for her authority to publish at all.

> And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy. (Acts 2:17-18)

The end of days was more than the content of these women's prophecies; it was the occasion. In the millennial moment, they were justified and inspired to speak and write with abandon. However, the relationship prophets had with language in early modern England was significantly problematic.

Mass distribution of prophecy through pamphlets increased the scale of the message; through publication, it could reach a larger audience.[51] The message of textual publication is "the change of scale or pace or pattern that it introduces into human affairs" (McLuhan 8); the message of the prophetic tract is not only that God has authorized this woman to speak, but also that others recognize and validate her authority. Publication enabled this process and thus literally authorized the prophet's voice. Nigel Smith argues that

> [i]nspired or 'gifted' prophetic performances were certainly part of the politics of the mid-century, and they found their way into print . . . . Accordingly, the tracts of the mid-century prophets created a new language that they claimed was untainted, Adamic, perfected: it could supply its readers as well as its authors with a totally liberated form of subjectivity. (423-4)

In fact, Quaker[52] "tracts were distributed in advance of the arrival of a particular Quaker speaker, marking a trail across the country: in the wake of the tract would come the living text of the Quaker prophet" (424-5). Lois G. Schwoerer argues:

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[51] Whereas the information we have about the way witches interacted with language appeared after their deaths, prophets often saw their own words published. This is not to say that prophets produced their tracts without help or interference, but unlike witches, the women discussed here were, at the very least, aware that their words had become public.

[52] Hugh Barbor estimates that 82 Quaker women wrote 220 of the 3,853 Quaker tracts published before 1700 (qtd. Mack 171). The impulse behind Quaker publishing was, in part, the very human "need to witness": to write, and to be read, testifying to the revelation they have received (John Barnard 4).

> for women the very act of using the printing press was of great significance. It was symbolic — a public defiance of traditional norms; in practical terms, it empowered women as nothing else had ever done, enabling them to make their ideas public, somewhat permanent, and available to a wider audience than would otherwise have been possible.[53] (57)

Smith and Schwoerer's arguments elucidate how clearly the prophet was publicly constructed by her words; the prophecies were perlocutionary in that their most obvious and effective effects occurred after the fact; the woman was most obviously a prophet, and her words most persuasively prophetic, once she was published.

Visionary women may have been willing to appropriate signs they did not completely support in order to be heard, and to speak under the auspices of prophecy without having the divine impulse behind their words. As Purkiss insists in *The Witch in History,* women had to insert themselves into the dominant discourse of their times, using recognizable codes to create their narratives. Hilary Hinds sees "the overwhelming majority of women writers from these sects" as working diligently to "distance themselves from the position of 'author' of their text," by denying their agency through self-abnegation, associating their writing with illness, or claiming to deny responsibility altogether (91). Likewise, women may have simply used tropes of passivity and lowliness to describe their subject positions because those images were accepted tickets into public discourse. Approaching this study with such this narrow analytical approach facilitates the view that these women were empowered proto-feminists, fighting from within to change political and religious systems, or even to collapse them. However, any time women asserted power — borrowed or their own - they put themselves in a vulnerable position. Since good women were supposed to stay at home and keep quiet, women who spoke in public were seen as necessarily sick, bad, or evil.

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[53] Schwoerer notes that "one hundred and twelve pamphlets by women appeared during the Civil War decade, compared to only 42 tracts during the preceding forty years" (60-1).

"Thrust into witches": Prophesying in Response to Hate Speech

Butler understands hate speech as a state-ratified illocutionary act, but one that allows recuperative redefining of self. A number of prophetic tracts dedicate textual space to responding to acts of hate speech, pushing back against attempts to metamorphose prophetic women, or entire sects, into lunatics, witches, and criminals. In "Saints or Sorcerers," Peter Elmer explores how vulnerable Quakers were to the accusation of "using diabolical witchcraft to promote the new heresy and subvert the established order" (145). George Fox seemed to relish the kind of dangerous showiness that attracted accusations of *maleficium* to the Quaker sect: Francis Higginson claimed Fox "'hath been vehemently suspected to be a sorcerer,' citing as evidence his particular ability to out-stare and 'fascinate' onlookers" (qtd. Elmer 147). Fox himself records that "local ministers and magistrates of Furness" reported that "neither water could drown me: nor could they draw blood of mee: and yet surely I was a witch" (*ibid.*). David Harley notes that "although the Quakers did not publicize George Fox's healing miracles performed in Quaker strongholds like north Lancashire, it was easier for Presbyterians to make the accusation of diabolism than for Quakers to refute it, despite their vociferous opposition to all illicit magic" (117-8). Fox took the idea of the witch, and used it not only to publicize himself, but also to publicize the miracles available to those in harmony with the inner light.

The language used to identify and condemn women for witchcraft in the previous century was, by the mid-seventeenth, used to deride and scorn sectarian believers. Quakers were not alone in being accused of witchcraft; Muggletonians and Quakers accused one another (Hinds 156). Thomas Smith "asserted that several Quaker men and women had confessed to Devil worship and copulation with Satan and maintained that most of those attending the witches' meeting were Quakers and Anabaptists" (Mack 258). The Catholics who imprisoned Sarah Cheevers told her that her fellow Quaker, Katherine Evans, "was a witch" (25). Quakers Mary Fisher and Anne Austin were stripped and searched for witch's marks while in Boston. Although there may have been some genuine fear that sectarians, especially Quakers, were possessed and able to possess others, an accusation of witchcraft more often than not worked as a way of discrediting or vilifying the woman and her sect. Anna Trapnel and Barbara Blaugdone illustrate how different audiences could read the prophetic utterance as a sign of divine power, demonic influence, or mental illness.

In *Report and Plea* (1654), Trapnel recounts how, with a warrant out for her arrest, the justices arrived to take her as she "was singing Praises to the Lord for his love" (21). While they called out "a witch, a witch, and ma[de] a great stir on the stairs," Trapnel's subversive divinity was confirmed by the trance that kept her "from their cruelty" (21). She was, however, aware of the threat of speaking, knowing that if she had been awake and speaking, the Justices' cruel assertion of her diabolism would have materialized in the form of the "witch-tryer-woman of that Town, and that she would fain have come with her great pin which she used to thrust into witches, to try them" (22).

Later, standing as a great "gazing stock to all sorts of people," Trapnel found herself face-to-face with a clergyman who, with "the witch-trying-woman, looked steadfastly in [her] face" (24). One assumes he was staring her down, searching her face for signs that would betray her demonic affiliation. Trapnel writes, "the report was that I would discover myself to be a witch, when I came before the Justices, by never having a word to answer for myself; for it used to be so among the witches, they could not speak before the Magistrates" (25). Tom Hayes claims that this "'used to be' is a clear indication of Trapnel's awareness that witchcraft was being written out of the dominant discourse; it was part of that connection between the sacred and the secular that was about to be lost" (n.p.). Trapnel was saved, he argues, "by virtue of being interpellated as a 'split' subject" (*ibid.*) Whereas the witch's voice was her own, Trapnel spoke with two voices: God's voice and her own. Hearing her speak so clearly, the "Lordship changed their minds," and "the traditional procedures of exercising power on, and of reading, the body of the witch are displaced in this case by a different juridical process, which demands the reincorporation of the unruly female subject within established structures" (Spargo 259). Allowing Trapnel to speak freely, outside a testimonial narrative, already cast her outside the role of the witch. She established her spiritual allegiance in a long, yet apparently clear speech, while the justices lost verbal continence: "all in a hurry and confusion, and sometimes would speak altogether" (Trapnel 26). This rhetorical triumph won the mob over. Trapnel writes:

> as I went in the crowd, many strangers were very loving and careful to help me out of the crowd: and the rude multitude said, 'Sure this woman is no witch, for she speaks many good words, which the witches could not.'
>
> And thus the Lord made the rude rabble to justify his appearance. (28)

Trapnel deflects credit, claiming, "I was nothing, the Lord put all in my mouth, and told me what I should say, and that from the written word, he put in my memory and mouth" (28). Able to retreat into a trance-like state of silence or burbling prophecy, or to stand, inspired by God, coherently defending herself based on her reason and his scriptures, Trapnel constructs herself as a prophet whose words must be valid. She merely trumpets God's message.

Similarly, despite her strong knowledge of the scriptures, the charge of witchcraft continually plagued Blaugdone. She writes in Corke: "Where-ever I opened my Mouth, there were some that received me, and would plead my Cause against my Persecutors" (8, 27); Blaugdone recognized that her power was in speaking. Although her preaching and testifying were what put her into danger, she was also linguistically adept enough, or perhaps pathetic enough, to convince someone to become her advocate. With a few words, she later convinced a man, whose false accusation had condemned an innocent innkeeper and his wife, to confess (he later recanted). Blaugdone's words had a perlocutionary effect on the man; they left him trembling, and he was further frightened when she reminded him that "the day of his judgment did draw nigh, wherein he must give an account of his actions" (33). When the man, who now feared for his life, "went to bed and died that night," his friends, according to Blaugdone, hailed her as "a true prophetess unto him" (35). She had performed the kind of power that marked a woman as a witch, and, by aligning her actions with God's hands, had made it into prophecy.

The effectiveness of Blaugdone's prophesying, however, seemed intermittent at best; she was not always socially adept enough to always know when to keep her mouth closed, or to how to minister to everyone. She was likewise unable to negotiate new relationships with friends and colleagues from her former, non-prophetic life. Believing she was intensely illuminated with the inner light and must be a terrible sight to behold, Blaugdone rationalized her acquaintances' sudden, cruel aloofness and fear:

> And those that were my former Acquaintance, with whom I had formerly been very conversant, and spent much time, and lodged at their Houses several times, even those now were afraid of me, and would not come near me, but the dread of God was upon me, and it made some of them Tremble; and some said I was a Witch: and when I would go to their Houses to reprove them, they were so mad that they would run away. (27-28)

One cannot help but wonder if it was her relentless preaching and reproving that drove her acquaintances to close their doors, rather than the portentous light she carried.

What, then, separates Blaugdone's warnings from the mumbled, antagonistic words that would eventually condemn a witch? Blaugdone seemed to be altering reality with her words, to such an extent that the witness began to fear for his life after speaking with her. Her prediction was realized, and the guilty were punished by a just God; however, her prophecy and her discourse were always based in scripture, and illuminated by the Quaker understanding of the inner light. Any foreknowledge or remarkable rhetorical skills were laid to God's account.

The copious nature of Blaugdone and Trapnel's prophesying could not entirely mask their adeptness with language, used to establish their chosen positions, and their power as God's prophets. They were compulsively lingual; the preponderance of their burbling and persistent prophetic output surely made them notable, as somewhat irritating preachers and companions. These women sometimes raised suspicion because they spoke effectively; however, effective speech is also what saved them. Trapnel and Blaugdone were able to recuperate the power of the witchcraft accusation. As Butler argues, their linguistic appropriation of the term *witch* reverses the effect of accusation, turning it from hate speech to validation of their awe-inspiring authority and personal sacrifice.

"Oh Lord! I commit our case unto thee": The Self and the Prophet

The prophet's spiritual labour manifests in numerous physical and verbal ways: in ecstatic trances;[54] or in inedia, as occurred with Puritan Sarah Wight and Fifth Monarchist Trapnel; or with sudden dumbness, as with Eleanor Channel, or deafness, as Esther Biddle experienced. Many Quaker prophets, like Sarah Blackborrow and Dorothy White, saw themselves called to testify, while Fifth Monarchist Mary Cary, whom Mack called "the most radical woman prophet of the 1640s," was not struck abruptly by a prophetic impulse, but came to it after years of study (117). Her ability to prophesy was based on a deep, learned understanding of the Bible, which, although it lacked some of the sexiness of inspired, ecstatic prophecy, positioned her as a prophet to the elite. Cary was supported by a circle of patrons, who "introduced her to the public as a virtuous and respectable gentlewoman" (*ibid.*). The prophet sees herself, albeit sometimes begrudgingly, as chosen to prophesy publicly God's truth.

However temporally, socially, or geographically far-reaching the prophecy might seem, it was always about the present and the imminent: the prophet's present world and the nigh return of King Jesus. The prophet foretells what will happen; she lifts the veil and brings sharpened immediacy to a story with a supposedly known conclusion: God will triumph, the godly will be rewarded, and evildoers will fall and be punished. Prophecies allow us to suspend disbelief, and to concentrate on how our actions and those of our contemporaries will contribute to or frustrate that particular prospect. The early modern prophet made future events seem immediately relevant, signifying key players in the Apocalypse and placing herself as necessary to its unfolding. Numerous prophets claimed that God chose them (or, in the case of Quakers, that they were a chosen people) to spread the message. In this way, the prophet became key to understanding the future and bringing her listeners closer to the mind behind the plan: God. Her language was the roadmap to a destiny they are already aware of; her narrative and its immediacy guided them into the master text.

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[54] Quietism and Quakerism explore how the soul must be ready to listen to the voice of God, or the inner light, speaking to it. Although neither sect believed in the (at least temporary) annihilation of self, in order to create room for God to speak, both sects, at least originally, sat in silence, disregarding regular ecclesiastical and secular concerns.

The prophetic soapbox was always a shaky one to stand on. Prophets, sects, and contemporary critics disagreed about whether women should even be able to testify. Hinds wrote that, for Daniel Rogers,[56] "a Puritan divine," it was not the "subjects of women's writing or preaching to which he objected, but its context and implications. He wrote that women who preach, prophesy, or write have shaken off the bridle of all subjection to their husbands" (qtd. Hinds 172). By challenging their naturally subjected position, any women who would testify or prophesy could be seen as vainglorious, and hence, a mere curse away from wickedness. In *A Treatise Concerning Enthusiasm* (1656), Meric Casaubon explains that "ignorant people" can, "in their confidence deceive themselves and others," by confusing medical matters with witchcraft and prophecy (101). It is "not without some indignation . . . that even learned men, yea men of great fame and credit in the world for their parts and performance in other kinds, have in this particular of ecstasies and raptures, been so apt in all ages to be gulled" (101). According to Daniel Rogers, Henry More wrote *Enthusiasmus Triumphatus* (1656) to contest the proliferation of ecstatic preachers. He wrote about the confusion of inspiration and enthusiasm, which he called the "full, but false, persuasion in a man that he is inspired" (2). Although inspiration "is to be moved in an extraordinary manner by the power or spirit of God to act, speak, or think what is holy, just or true," the imagination can easily be influenced by dreams, fancies, and phantoms, becoming melancholic and mistaking melancholy for the "Holy Zeal and Spirit of God" (2, 12). More blames melancholy, not the Devil, for the disease of enthusiasm. Prophecy, he notes, is a matter of lucky guesses over skill (21). Although Rogers, Casaubon, and More provide just three examples of reaction to the proliferated writings about religious zeal and prophecy that flooded the streets of seventeenth-century England, they demonstrate how prophesying was believed to subvert the hierarchy implicit in early modern gendered relationships, and to trick the ignorant and the educated alike. They believed that prophesying was itself a kind of mental illness.

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[56] Hinds is citing Daniel Rogers' Matrimonial Honour (1642), quoting from Barbara Gerd Samuelsen Yoshioka's "Imaginal Worlds: Woman as Witch and Preacher in Seventeenth-Century England," an unpublished PhD. thesis (New York: Syracuse University, 1977).

Can contemporary theorists build on the work of previous critics, and read the prophet as producer, owner, and publicist of her prophecy? There are a number of women who easily fit into this mould, and political prophecy is a logical place to begin looking for self-possessed women. Numerous prophets, like Eleanor Davies, were savvy enough to recognize how prophecy, particularly concerning political issues, allowed them to participate in social and political conversations usually restricted to men. Because of her message's divine origin, the prophet has unequaled freedom to speak freely and harshly on personal, social, and political issues. From a prophetic platform, women could condone or condemn religious institutions, state affairs, or social inequalities.

The linguistic choices women made in their prophecies illustrate how they saw themselves, and their roles in a changing world. Even if they ardently maintained that their message came from God, their identities, affiliations, and desires became part of that message. Knowledge of God's plans facilitates God's plans; key players in a prophecy have to diligently and consciously play out their roles. Many prophets used prophecy as a platform from which to address King or Parliament. Mary Pope, Elizabeth Warren, Katherine Johnson, and Anne Monck supported both King and Parliament, and saw political rebellion as unjustifiable (Garber 112-3). Garber also remarks that Quaker women, like Dorothy White and Anne Clayton, "offered a challenge to traditional authority but refrained from advocating the destruction of authority" (114).

Her relationship with God, as one of the elect, ensured that Sarah Wight's words had credibility because they were God's; ten full pages at the beginning of *Exceeding Riches of Grace* are dedicated to citing the Biblical references in her prophecies. Despite her well-documented scriptural knowledge, she maintained a non-threatening relationship with the gendered hierarchy, through the passivity of her position as a sometimes deaf, blind, starving, and suffering, bedridden daughter. Wight saw herself as the worst of all sinners; she had, at least in her own mind, seen the blackest part of her own soul, and concluded that she was damned. Wight saw her spiritual experiences, and her pilgrimage to the abyss and back, as proof of her authority. In her short life, she had battled more demons than those around her; this was the locus of her power. Whereas Henry Jessey strategically crafted *Exceeding Riches of Grace* to showcase Wight's biblical knowledge — wisdom from the mouths of babes — Wight herself integrated her prophecy and her suffering until they become part of the same voice and the same utterances. She shared a suffering which paralleled Christ's temptation in the wilderness and his crucifixion, all in one.[57]

Elizabeth Poole, mourning over the state of her country, writes: "[a] vision was set before me, to shew her cure, and the manner of it" (A2r); the strong masculine body of the army was to cure the "crooked, sick, weak & Imperfect in body" feminine kingdom.[58]

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[57] As the lowest of the low, Wight suffered as only Christ suffered, and for a while, she wanted no food but him, eating only "manna" and drinking from the cup God offered her. Like many of the prophets, Wight may have defined her power through her suffering and through her social influence, but besides an emaciated or beaten body, or a heavier purse, few prophets could turn to external proof to validate their spiritual influence.

She identified herself as the spiritual nursemaid who would facilitate this healing union. Mack writes that Poole:

> criticized the king when she appeared before the Council chamber in 1649 but counseled Oliver Cromwell against regicide, asserting that all the "glorious glittering images of state policies, religious ordinances, orders, faiths, lights, knowledges. . . drawn over [with] beautiful pretenses" could not hide the "worldly dark part" in the king's executioners. (99)

Poole claimed a clear understanding of the divine imperative. While she "believed that the coronation oath constituted a contract between the monarch and his subjects, she also wrote that the former's authority was conferred by God, not the people" (Garber 159). Poole writes here not as an observer, but as a participant in the unfolding political dilemma. She concludes her narrative with a simple, unmistakable, and non-negotiable order: "Bring him to his triall, that he may be convicted in his conscience, but touch not his person" (Av4). Even if the formula is standard, her assertion is a verdictive and an excercitive; she is passing down a verdict based on the weight of her prophetic stance.

Prophets who, like Fifth Monarchist Cary, "believed rebellion against tyrannical powers was justified," also based their authority and identity on their divine visions and prophetic skill (Garber 113). David Loewenstien argues that Cary "recognizes—and gives voice to—the desire of other frustrated women prophets and preachers in her revolutionary age who, forbidden or unable to speak, have yet to see fulfilled their

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[58] Poole chooses the word "kingdom," over "country," to emphasize the necessity of curing the political body as it stands, not lopping off its head in order to create a new one, as happened to Charles the First in 1649.

[59] Cary, from the safety of two years after the regicide, asks:

> How could they which are so few in number, and in the eies of the world despised, and despicable creatures, have carried on that work so effectually, as to have cut off the late King; though it was verily beleeved, and it is very probable, there was at that very time, twenty to one in this Nation of England, that were against it; had not the Lord assisted them with thousands of Angels, and evidently manifested himselfe to bee with them? (31-32)

visionary yearnings and to acquire the language of prophecy, exhortation, and zealous communication, including the ability to exercise it in the public sphere" (138). However, Cary herself found a linguistic shelter from criticism by publishing *The Little Horns Doom and Downfall* (1651), seven years after[59] she claimed to have written it, "because that men would then generally have been more uncapable of receiving of such things, then now they are, because now these things are fulfilled; and prophesies are then best understood, when they are fulfilled" (A7v). Despite the unpopularity of Cary's stance, she saw it as her purpose to explain her vision clearly to the world. She was an elect prophet because she prophesied, and she prophesied because she was one of the elect.

Cary tried to make it explicit that her prophecy was also God's prophecy; her vision was an interpretation of Biblical prophecy and thus had that authority behind it; to doubt her was to doubt God. In order to hammer her point home, Cary warns that those "who may slight this interpretation," slight God and his ability in "pre-decreeing of the things he will have to come to passe many hundred yeeres after" (42-43). Moreover, Cary asserts that doubters "doe give lesse honour to God then the heathens did to their Devilish Oracle [and] ... than they doe to Astronomers, who from the stars do pretend to foretell things" (43). Only God can foretell things "infallibly," which he occasionally does through "his servants the Prophets; and therefore what they have declared from God, hath been done for our observation" (44). As a prophet, one of God's servants, Cary asserts that it is her duty to rend the veil of mystery and understand God's prophecy before the masses could comprehend it. She distributes the prophecies when "they are fulfilled, or neer to be fulfilled," because only then could the people understand what she already knows (44). Cary, like many Fifth Monarchists, prophesied with a political lens and agenda; however, she claimed to be doing so only out of duty and, conveniently enough for her personal safety, after the fact.

Even prophets who seemed to be operating within approved linguistic modes, for their sects if not for devout women in general, still had to negotiate carefully between representing a whole, cogent self, and prophesying for God. In *Hidden in Plain Sight,* Mary Garman depicts Sarah Jones, in "This is the light and appearance of the Truth" (1650), speaking because "God told her to speak and gave her the words" (20). However, the quote Garman uses ("I have received the eternal council of the Lord which lyes as a heavy weight upon my soul ready to be discharged") is a commissive, a declarative decision to undertake something, and not a puppet-like reproduction of divine discourse. Jones' testimony is the relation of a divine intimacy, one she is compelled to share not because he told her to, but because she wants to warn her readers of his displeasure (36). Jones follows this statement with the proclamation that, although she may have not yet "attained that degree of perfection," she "presseth hard after it" (*ibid.*). She actively speaks to her community about God's desires of them and invites others to "joyn hands with [her] in this work" (*ibid.*). Her texts are meant to unite God, her community, and herself. God's council, in fact, only takes up a scant few moments in her text; the rest is Jones' council. As a prophet, she took the responsibility to warn and advise her "babes," becoming their spiritual mother and advocate.

Esther Biddle was not a passive petitioner. Her well-known proclamations offer a proactive approach to bringing even the highest in the land to their knees, quaking before her powerful words. In *The Trumpet of the Lord Sounded Forth* (1662), Biddle cries out, "Oh King! this is my counsel unto thee, and thy Rulers and Judges," immediately establishing her authority and her place in a new power dynamic (9). Her tract is a perlocutionary utterance; she also appeals to "England, Scotland and Ireland" and the "high and lofty ones" to listen to her speak, calling them to embrace morality, ethics, and a decent fear of God (11). She cries out, "Oh Lord! I commit our case unto thee," knowing that God will "fight our Battle, and plead our cause with the mighty earth" (10). Biddle did not pray for God to save them; she knew he would.

Elaine Hobby reads Biddle's self-representation in *Woe to thee City of Oxford* and *Woe to the Towne of Cambridge* (1655) "as one of the 'Saints,' God's chosen ones, who are empowered to 'Judge the earth" (298). In this capacity, she is "reworking" God's message into an "explicit commentary on the power structures of her own society, and an inescapable command to overturn them" (299). Early modern English women prophets understood the climate they operated in, and the prejudices they would find there. In order to get any respect in this already hostile environment, they had to prove the validity of their position and the authority of their words.

According to Hinds, Mary Howgill's opinions of Cromwell's corruption were "unequivocally expressed"; however, Hinds argues that Howgill stresses, "not that it is she who is warning Cromwell, but simply the fact that he has been warned" (149, 142). This is where I believe Hinds gets it wrong. Howgill exemplifies a woman who was not "entirely passive and speaking only in his voice, even though her carnal self appeared to be screaming at a magistrate in front of town hall" (174). Her voice, her condemnations, her opinions, and her interpretation of the vision surface unapologetically within her text. She was not merely the instrument used to write God's messages, but rather the face that could haunt Cromwell at the moment of his demise, and the voice of reason preaching to the corrupt.

Howgill also felt the impulse to warn others of the repercussions of their conformity to the social convention of bowing to their superiors, and their taste for decadent "cascading wigs, extreme décolletage, high-heeled shoes and massively applied cosmetics" (Mack 166), worldliness strongly rejected by Quakers. In *A Paper of Hers directed to the Inhabitants of Dover,*[60] Howgill warns the English people that "your gold rings and courtier jewels shall be pulled off, for your jewels are not the true jewels of God . . . . your jewels, your willingness and your filthy garments, inwardly and outwardly, the Lord God will destroy" (5-6). Although Howgill located Cromwell's sin in his decadence, deceit, and

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[60] This message came "forth by the Spirit of the Lord, via Howgill, on May 7, 1656," as the addendum to A Remarkable Letter of Mary Howgill to Oliver Cromwell.

[61] Howgill saw Cromwell as having slapped away the hand of God, and placing his "trust in the arm of flesh" (2). Howgill warns:

> thou art one with all them who are set against Christ; for verily I saw unto thee, he will

brutality, it was the "pride of [his] own heart," and his choice of "glory in this world," from which all his other sins sprang (*A Remarkable Letter* 1).[61]

In the Vision of the Lord of Hosts, God speaks directly to Howgill. She recalls hearing "The Lords voice, who spake unto me, and said Fear not thou, my daughter, none of these things which I have shewed unto thee; but believe in my Name, made known unto thee" (*Vision,* 4). She asked him, who will "stand for thee, or who shall declare thy Name, or speak of thee" (4). God answered her question to her "great satisfaction" by instructing: "Keep these things in thine own breast, and seal the words in thy own heart, and wait upon me, said the living God, until I shew thee further and until my appointed time, that I bid thee to publish them abroad" (5).[62] Howgill merely waited until God told her the correct time to publish her vision,[63] positioning herself as a person doubly blessed: one "who wait[ed] upon God, and hear[d] what he saith unto them, either by revelation, by vision or by Prophecy," and as one who could "speak or write by Revelation, by Prophecy

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> overtake thee when thou hast filled up thy measure; for he who is the Lord of heavan and earth, is ready to deliver thee into the hands of thy enemies, within and without; for I say unto thee, thy way is the darkness, and thou has turned thy back on him who is our strength and our light. (2)

Howgill seems to be setting the importance of her warning in close proximity with Christ's own intents. Christ himself seems poised to act, ready to deliver Cromwell to his enemies, but not yet. Perhaps he was waiting to see how Cromwell would react to Howgill's impassioned warning.

[62] It could be that the minor upheaval of the King's restoration signaled to Howgill that the end of days was coming, in which case, her vision, like many others of the period, is millennial. The "biggest among them, and greatest in fury" was Satan, kept for a thousand years, but loosed from the pits of hell one last time (Vision 6). Howgill writes that much of her vision had already been fulfilled upon English soil, and "that which is behind is nigh to be fulfilled . . . . violent men have done great violence even unto God's worshipers" (6). There were obviously many violent precedents to justify Howgill's assertion that her prophecy was beginning to come to pass. I believe that, although it operates on one level as a millennial vision, it also stands as a warning to the exiting Richard Cromwell, and moreover, the returning King. As she condemns Cromwell in *A Remarkable Letter* for his arrogance, and warns him it will bring about his imminent demise, her vision of the Fallen Morning Star also stands as a poignant warning to the new King; pomposity once brought down the strongest of God's angels, and it could bring him down too.

[63] Howgill was compelled to publish her vision in 1662, during the second year of Charles II's reign. In February of 1660, when Howgill first had her vision, Oliver Cromwell had died (1658) and his son Richard was in power as his successor. In February of 1660, the royalist General Monck entered London, bent on restoring the monarchy. The restoration of the monarchy, which placed Charles II on the throne, took place in May of 1660.

or Vision" (5). Seized by Christ to interpret and verbalize his words, Howgill was among the most blessed; her connection to God was positive, participatory, and empowering. While she uses many familiar tropes, metaphors, and symbols in her texts, she refused to comply with the self-abnegation often used to justify the chutzpa of publishing. Rather than embed herself under layers of literary justification, Howgill, as one of the doubly blessed, allowed her personality and opinions to sing out, beside, above, and within the divine she was "required to write" (6).

Blaugdone constructs her prophetic subjectivity, in *An Account of the Travels, Sufferings & Persecutions* (1691), in much the same language as Howgill's. Blaugdone was the Lord's "vessel," a solid instrument that contained, transported, and spread God's words (8-9). Blaugdone's narrow escapes from witchcraft accusations emphasized this Quaker construction of Christian subjectivity, as well as her ability to perform under pressure. En route to Ireland, she writes: "we had so much foul Weather, so the Sea-men said, that I was the cause of it, because I was *Quaker*; and they conspired to fling me over-board"; however, the captain "charged them not to meddle with me" (*An Account*, 21). The sailors assumed that her mere presence could alter reality; the fact that the captain protected, rather than reprimanded her may have served to reinforce the belief in the witch's power. When Blaugdone actually had the opportunity to speak to the sailors without frightening them, she was able to establish the truth of her words and the authority of their speaker:

> And afterwards we were in a Storm upon the First Day and I was moved to go upon the Deck, and speak among them, and Pray for them; and they were all made very quiet, and said They were more beholding to me then they were to their Priest, because I did Pray for them, and he did not open his Mouth to say anything amongst them. (21-22)

Blaugdone was persuasive because she was willing to speak to the sailors on their own level; her materiality, coupled with the plainness of her speech, allowed for intimate discourse. The distance and silence of their priest, rather than maintaining the mystery and the divinity of mercy, had physically, verbally, and spiritually isolated him from the sailors. Blaugdone stepped in in his place.

Blaugdone later discovered her "service" in Dublin, in a conversation with the Deputy about the banishment of Francis Howgill, Edward Burrough and, one assumes, Quakers in general. Moved to talk, Blaugdone reminds him that God "did give [her] words to speak, and bid him . . . to let it alone and if it be of God, it will stand; but if it be of Man, it will fall" (22-23, 24). She took her argument from Acts 5:38-39, which reads:

> And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought: But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God.

Her position, and the presence of Quakers in Dublin, was justified through the inarguable discourse of the Bible. Implied in her argument was the threat that, by fighting against the Quakers, the Deputy may be fighting against God himself. Blaugdone records that:

> when the Power and Preference of the Lord was so with me, that it made the Man to be much concerned. And when I had done, he asked the Priest, What he had to say to that which I spake: And the Priest said It was all very true and very good, and he had nothing to say against it, if we did speak as we meant. (*An Account* 25)

Her position as a savvy and persuasive rhetorical opponent was based on a solid knowledge of scripture. Considering that scriptural recitation was one of the preliminary tests for witchcraft, Blaugdone obviously passed. Her prophetic chops, however, did not satisfy all her acquaintances, and the echo of the witch haunts Blaugdone's narrative, as it did for many of her contemporaries.

Speaking Subjects

Early modern witches and prophets were often seen as rebels and freaks, women who challenged and subverted gendered, social, and political roles merely by speaking. They had the power to change the world with language, and did so; reality responded to their spells and prophecies. Although it seems that these women spoke outside all norms, they were usually speaking within limited and limiting forms. It is remarkable that these women spoke at all, in a society that sought to silence them. It is still more remarkable that they were able to negotiate rigid semantic frameworks so effectively. From within these structures, they were able to assert their real identities, and it is this that makes them such compelling figures.

This is not to say that witches and prophets were completely successful in navigating the linguistic spaces they encountered; in fact, by failing, they teach us still more about how they used language to establish their identities. When the use of Latin was condemned as demonic, they claimed that their familiars made them use it; when cursing turned to spell-casting, they appropriated this power and used it with a vengeance. Despite her vehement denials of any wrongdoing, the witch might just turn herself into a repentant sinner in the end. Witches might also fight the scripting of their lives into a loaded legal narrative, so fiercely that, despite their inevitable execution, they made the system doubt itself. Witches, who could create change through language, likewise created themselves by speaking; their desires and identities eat away at the formulaic narrative until we can see the woman through the gaol walls. Prophets, who were supposed to speak only for God, spoke for themselves. Their goals, roles, and agendas were broadcast as part of their prophecies. The prophet's "I," which was supposed to be sublimated, contextualized God's words, not the other way around. Even when they were in the most danger, prophets could not stop speaking. The prophet gave her advice based on God's will. She was more than the medium, she was the message: the prophecies of daughters and handmaids proved that the end of days had come, when women were meant warn the world. Witches and prophets in early modern England were not saying the same things or speaking for the same reasons, but they were negotiating dangerous linguistic terms with

Conjoined Twins: Identity and Body

So I stood at their time with my hands bound behind me with the stone weight of iron upon my head and a bit in my mouth to keep me from speaking.

-- Dorothy Waugh (1656)

The previous chapter explores how women created their spiritual identities based on their relationship with language, through what they said and how they said it. Language was public and performative; the unheard curse was a call for retribution and the mumbled prophecy was a warning. Whether their impulse was divine or demonic in origin, these women ultimately fashioned the language they used, and, in doing so, made it theirs. Women emphatically and publicly broadcast their spiritual identities, and their bodies spoke volumes about their spiritual alliances.

Women bled, birthed, hungered, and wept as witches and prophets. In inhabiting their bodies, they occupied a discernibly spiritual state and experienced exceptionally intimate relationships with God and the Devil. As Judith Butler argues in *Bodies that Matter*, "the very contours of the body are sites which vacillate between the psychic and the material. Bodily contours and morphology are not merely implicated in an irreducible tension between the psychic and the material but are that tension" (66); the woman becomes a witch or prophet most inescapably within her own body, rather than in a courtroom, or a dusty village square. Once a woman was identified as a spiritually significant person, she lost the right to bodily privacy in very real ways. Her body became the most convincing proof that she was a witch or prophet, and she was searched for physical indicators to corroborate her spiritual subjectivity. The witnesses of these corporeal signifiers decided whether she embodied demonism or divinity. Her peers, in turn, could praise God or damn the Devil by the way they treated her. However, the witch and prophet's embodied spiritualities were not merely concepts imposed onto them; their bodies were believed actually to change in response to what was happening to them spiritually. They were able to pass through the veil, and come to understand secrets and experience powers unavailable to those still bound by the mortal coil. Witches and prophets were not reduced to mere bodies through which spiritual forces moved; they defined their embodied spirituality as much as it defined them.

Studying the Spiritual Speaking Body

The bodies of early modern English witches and prophets were read as public entities. God and the Devil were seen within the physical changes the witch and prophets experienced, legal attacks supposedly proved that the state had a handle on the witchcraft phenomenon and unruly sectarians, and citizens kept peace in their own backyards by acting as the witch and prophet's judge, jury, and, sometimes, executioners.[1] However, we know nothing of how witches saw their bodies outside recorded witchcraft trials and tracts, and often hear about ecstatic prophetic bodily performances from contemporary writers and compilers, not from the prophets themselves. Malefic and prophetic bodies are thus problematic spaces for critical inquiry, due to the many levels of interpretive and editorial mediation which exist in contemporary texts. However, by engaging in a comprehensive survey of published accounts, we can see how witches and prophets, like ourselves, are not two-dimensional paper dolls. They are complicated subjects who are far more than the sum of their parts.

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[1] In *Witchcraft and Witch Trials* (2000), Durston lists a number of factors which have to come into play before a persecution for *maleficium* can be successful: a potential suspect, a convincing incident, villagers willing to make a complaint and testify, a Justice of the Peace who is sympathetic to witchcraft accusations, and a jury willing to entertain accusations of witchcraft as real crimes (224).

Identity is subject to a number of fluid factors. Nancy Chodorow writes that "each person's sense of gender – her gender identity or gendered subjectivity – is an inextricable fusion or melding of personally created (emotionally and through unconscious fantasy) and cultural meaning" (517). Individuals also "create new meanings in terms of their own unique biographies and histories of intra-psychic strategies and practices" (*ibid.*). Gender cannot be set apart from culture, nor can it be excised from the individual, and as such, is always already inflected with each person's experiences, language, relationships, and culture.[2] The witch's perception of her own body and gender was influenced, but not dictated, by the forces around her. Although seventeenth-century prophets saw their bodies in relation to God, Christ, their editors, and their own texts, these are just some of the entry points into an investigation of these women's relationship with their own spirituality.

A discussion of the way the body and spirituality functioned for early modern English witches and prophets is necessarily multivalent. In "The Other Body: Women's inscription of their physical images in 16th- and 17th-century England," Lynette McGrath writes that connections between "women's perceptions of their bodies and access to linguistic power [enabled] them to define their sense of self"; it was the combination of "body and language [which allowed] access to linguistic agency, to subjectivity" (30). She concludes that the body, "finally, is the site of action" (30). Creating identity was a threefold process for early modern English witches and prophets: the witch and prophet had to perform their embodied spirituality sufficiently well to become a site of public interest. I am using the term *embodied spirituality* as the expression of spirituality through a recognizable series of key signs, which clearly demarcate the subject's divine or demonic allegiance. For any woman involved in spiritual dealings, the female body is read as open enough to allow spiritual forces inside easily. For witches, this would be the kind of inverted maternity associated with Mother Waterhouse (*The Apprehension and Confession* (1589)): harming of infants and keeping and feeding imps. With Anne Foster (*Full and True* (1674) we hear of how female sexuality is debased when women are accused of feeding imps from teats developed in sex organs. Finally, with Elizabeth Clark (*A True and Exact* (1645) we hear of women having sex with the Devil: the ulimate diabolic union.[3] For prophets, like Sarah Wight, embodied spirituality had more to do with becoming so stereotypically feminine in passivity, enthusiasm, and embodiedness that God could easily use this vessel to trumpet his word, that women could easily be swayed by either side of the spiritual continuum, and that spiritual battles could necessarily be played out within the body of the prophet. The prophet's body, in shutting off consumption, communication, and menstruation, was believed to transcend normal femininity and come closer to a masculine composition (and thereby closer to God). These signs became a kind of language which articulated the identities which these women either encouraged, or accepted. Differences or variations within performances of embodied spirituality were ignored, or rewritten to fall into line. Critics like Richard Bernard produced volumes that cited the Bible to establish the reality of witches, included detailed precedents, and provided checklists to establish a woman's demonic identity. For prophets, critics like Henry Jessey would also cite biblical passages and precedents, but also extensively used first-person witnesses to verify the prophet's physical and spiritual state and history. Claims made about witches and prophets were also verified by lists of witnesses who could attest to the truth of the allegations.

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[2] For a discussion on gender and the body of the public woman, see Susan. C. Staub's *Nature's Cruel Stepdames: Murderous Women in Street Literature of Seventeenth Century England.* (2005); Garthine Walker's *Crime, Gender and the Social Order in Early Modern England* (2003); Mary E. Fissel's *Vernacular Bodies* (2004); Lynette McGrath's, "The Other Body: Women's Inscription of Their Physical Images in 16th- and 17th-century England" (*Women's Studies* 26:1 (1997), 27-58); and Gail Kern Paster's "The Unbearable Coldness of Female Being: Women's Imperfection and the Humoral Economy" (*English Literary Renaissance* 28:3 (1998), 416-40).

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[3] Although its influence in early English witchcraft trials and tracts is debatable, Heinrich Kramer's conclusion, in *Malleus Maleficarum* (1486), that a woman is "more carnal than a man," is used as just one reason why women might copulate with devils. In the minds of European witch-hunters, female sexuality was intrinsically wedded to witchcraft. For information on the presence of sex within witchcraft trials, see Walter Stephens' *Demon Lovers* (2002), especially pp. 58-124. For European preoccupations with witchcraft and sexuality, see Joseph Klaits' *Servants of Satan: The Age of the Witch Hunts* (1985), p. 51. In *A Mind of Its Own: A Cultural History of the Penis* (2001), David M. Friedman, notes that on

> January 1897, [Sigmund Freud] was struck by the similarity between the written reports of medieval witch hunters and what he was hearing in his consulting room. "Why are [the witches'] confessions . . . so like the communications made by my patients?" he wondered to Fliess. The Inquisitors "prick with needles" and the "witches" respond with the "same old cruel story," an obvious piece of fiction. But "why," Freud asked, "did the devil invariably abuse them sexually?" A letter sent the following week proposed a solution: "Bringing in witches is [paying off]," Freud wrote. Their flying and cruel stories can be explained as fantasies. "The broomstick they ride," he told his friend, is "the great Lord Penis." (171)

There are, of course, exceptions to the sexualized demonic relationship. In "A full and true account of the proceedings at the sessions of oyer and terminer" (1682), Jane Kent, "a Woman of about 60 years of Age, was Indicted for Witch-Craft, and using several Diabolick Arts" (3). The woman who searched her claimed that "she had a Teat on her back, and unusual Holes behind her ears." Able to produce "evidence that she had lived honestly, and was a great pains-taker, and that she went to Church, with many other Circumstances, the Jury found her not Guilty" (4).

Once they had the attention of their peers, the bodies of the witch and prophet were (re)interpreted to align with the demonic or divine. That is to say, the body was searched for the corporeal markers like teats, inedia, supernatural hardness, impenetrability by water, which would signify its special spiritual state. As in *Great News from the West of England* (1689), only once physical proof was found where the woman's actions (often traveling as far back in memory as necessary to corroborate the stories told about her, or to shift originary blame for her current state onto someone else) were reread and validated as signifying an evolution to her current position. In the face of irrefutable physical evidence, she retold her own stories to reincorporate embodied spirituality.

Contemporary theorists, like James VI of Scotland and Joseph Glanville,[4] believed that the female body manifested signs of prophetic or demonic power. Because behavioral deviance was only prosecutable if it was criminal, the key to a successful witchcraft prosecution was what the bodies themselves exposed. Concrete physical indicators were often used as quasi-scientific proof of spiritual specialness. For witches, the body was inscribed with meaning; it was walked, forced to sit, imprisoned, stripped, searched, scratched, drowned, impaled, and finally hung, in an attempt to make it betray the secrets she would not linguistically divulge. Prophets were also watched lest inspiration be missed, or worse, lest the entranced or starved prophet should awake or eat, and break the spell. Families and children, especially those unfortunate births recorded as monstrous, were examined for signs to indicate whether physical aberrations were to be read as punishment for familial wickedness, or as signifying God's use of a righteous family to display his anger at the world's wickedness, depending on the writer's own agenda.

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[4] Epistemon, the speaker in James' *Daemonologie*, argues that more women are witches because the "sexe is frailer then man is, so is it easier to be intrapped in these grosse snares of the Deuill" (44). James' view on the water test will be explored later in this chapter. Glanville begins *Saducismus Triumphatus* (1681) by arguing that, of the five bizarre physical elements associated with the witch's embodied spirituality, "(1) their flying out of windows, after they have anointed themselves, to remote places. (2) Their transformation into Cats, Hares, and other Creatures. (3) Their feeling all the hurts in their own bodies which they have received in those. (4) Their raising Tempests, by muttering some nonsensical words, or performing ceremonies alike impertinent as ridiculous. And (5) their being suck'd in a certain private place of their bodies by a Familiar," all are real (10). His logic is that the more "absurd and unaccountable these actions seem, the greater confirmations are they to me of the truth of those Relations, and the reality of what the Objectors would destroy. For these circumstances being exceeding unlikely, judging by the measures of common belief, 'tis the greater probability they are not fictitious" (*ibid.*). The witch's identifying physical signs are thus, as Byron writes in *Don Juan*, "strange - but true, for truth is always strange; Stranger than fiction" (101:1-2).

Only after bodily proof of a demonic or divine affiliation was identified did the witch and prophet's performance of embodied spirituality matter. The process of publicly being called into being as a witch or prophet changed the way these women understood and spoke about their bodies. More importantly, it changed how their auto/biographies were produced. Witches added to their stories each time they were examined, progressively traveling backwards and further incriminating themselves, while they fell in line with some court-solicited truth[5]. When (and if) a witch's mark was found, many women, like Elizabeth Sawyer, eventually abandoned any individual concept of self or gender, and reconfigured their stories to include performances of demonic femininity: they admitted to having an insensible mark, keeping a familiar and feeding it blood, passing witchcraft onto one's own children, and having a sexual pact with Satan. The woman's gender had to be rethought so that, in the telling, one re-inscribed a legal understanding of the performance of malefic femininity, and streamlined unique personal stories, gender, and bodily aberrations. The same can be said for the ecstatic prophet;[6] her actions were only interesting when enough peers recognized them as prophetic. Her body had to display recognizable indicators before the prophet was considered valid; only then were her past actions reread, as they were for Anna Trapnel, as foreshadowing her spiritual state. For ecstatic prophets, whose rebellion, self-destruction, fasting, inedia, amenorrhea, and trances were transcribed, edited, compiled, and published by one or more third parties, the association of body and prophecy was indivisible.[7]

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[5] For more information on the evolution of confessions, see Chapter One.

[6] This is perhaps why erudite prophets were considered tub-preachers. One was not supposed to be able to be a normal mother, wife, businesswoman, and a prophet, all at the same time.

Associations with witchcraft and prophecy stigmatized and sexualized women's bodies. Popular culture emphasized the unruliness and ungodliness of sectarian culture by representing it as a breeding ground for licentiousness.[8] Witchcraft, like prophecy, seems to have been passed down through generations. Motherhood, biological and metaphorical, was a spiritual conduit; the sins or gifts of the mother were visited upon her children. Children could, like Margaret Flowers, help define their mothers, in turn. The well-worn stereotype that witches were poor, old, deformed widows and beggars was common enough that Reginald Scot commented on it in *The Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1584). The aged, decrepit body became a metaphor for spiritual corruption; witch marks or teats represented the demonic union that made a woman into a witch.[9]

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[7] The feminine ideal of devotional virtue was tied up with asceticism; the inedia of earlier prophets is always a well-published aspect of their fame. Conversely, the performative and tangible expression of Wright's ecstatic devotion is more analogous to earlier prophetic women, like the Sicilian prophet Eutochia of Messina, who prayed for inedia to symbolize her piety. Eutoschia's ecstatic starvation began as self-imposed anorexia, but she soon became unable to eat "and the mere smell of food upset her stomach and caused her to vomit; for this [grace] she was very happy" (Bell 144). In fact, "nearly half of the forty-two Italian women who lived and died in the thirteenth century and came to be recognized as saints exhibited an anorexic behavior pattern. Thus a new ideal of female piety was forged" (Bell 149). In the quest to become brides of Christ, "their bodies became impediments, painful reminders of the earthly realities they sought to transcend" (Bell 149).

[8] In *The Father's Seductions: Improper Relations of Desire in Seventeenth Century Non-Conformist Communities* (*Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature* 17:2 (1998), 255-68), Tamsin Spargo argues that the "spiritual yearnings of dissenting women are read in connection with the supposed carnal desires of the dissenting minister with potentially fatal results" (257).

[9] Although Reginald Scot mocked the stereotype of the witch as necessarily an old beggar-woman, Johann Weyer saw age the witch's age as a symptom of the vulnerability which greased the wheels of the demonic pact. Weyer saw the witch as "dulled by age, or inconstant by reason of her sex, or unsteady because of her weak-mindedness, or in despair because of a disease of the mind" (174). For more information on Weyer's construction of the witch, see *De praestigiis deamonum* (1583).

In contrast, seventeenth-century culture did not conceive of a single, stereotyped, gendered body for the prophet. Although contemporary anti-sectarian tracts depicted visionary women as monstrous, manifesting their corruption by giving birth to misshapen offspring, there remained a certain fascination with the prophet's body and her physical experience. What the prophet's body did, and how it changed, signified its spiritual specialness: the entranced body represented an indivisible communion with God; the public prophesier was a walking, talking symbol of the corruption of the world. Public prophetic performances and the missionary bodies which produced them represented the beliefs of the sect; an attack on those bodies, as often happened to Quaker women like Barbara Blaugdone, became a way to attack the sect as a whole.

Witches: Mapping the Body / Telling the Story

The gender of the early modern English and Continental witch has been one of the main focuses of early modern witchcraft studies. Although this work seeks to avoid a reductionist view which focuses on femaleness as demonic, the ways in which early English witchcraft accusations were tied to the female body demand exploration. As such, this section will explore general physical indicators of demonic compact: age, impenetrable skin, trial by swimming, the evolution of the witch's mark, and, finally, the sexualized contract. The witch was believed, like Faustus, to have little or no power of her own, yet her body absorbed the *maleficium;* she was not a vessel for diabolic forces, but rather a mercenary, whose own skin became a kind of armor, and whose body became the site of the war against the godly.

Malefic Age

The way the aged moved through the early modern world was largely determined by how their society responded to aging. For early modern English witches, age became a primary sign of their corruption, so much so that Reginald Scot emphasized the ludicrousness of the aged-witch stereotype.[10] He saw those being persecuted as "old, lame, bleare-eied, pale, fowle and full of wrinkles . . . leane and deformed, shewing melancholie in their faces . . . doting, scolds, mad, and devlish" (29). Their age, and the diseases that accompanied it, made witches horrifying. The witch's age was more than a part of her legal standing; it was physical proof of her spiritual corruption.

Witch-hunting was not ageism *per se*, but, as both Robin Briggs and Diane Purkiss explore, the onset of menopause locates women on the boundary of femininity. Betty Friedan articulates how our own society reacts to the aging body in *The Fountain of Age* (1993). She argues that "the image of age as inevitable decline and deterioration . . . was also a mystique of sorts, but one emanating not an aura of desirability, but a miasma of dread" (41). The aged body of the seventeenth-century English witch was, similarly, the inverse of sexual desirability and procreative fertility; it was a symbol for the dread associated with decay and death. Gregory Durston argues that it took "years (occasionally even decades) of mounting rumor and suspicion" before women were brought to court as witches (207). If, as Robin Briggs clarifies, it took "fifteen or twenty years for the typical witch to get to court" (264), then the end of fertility marked a dangerous physical and social transition for suspected witches (264). The aged witch was at the peak of her power in her later years, not because she was infused with decades of wisdom and learning, but because she was no longer tied to the world by a husband and children. She was closer to death, and therefore, closer to the demonic power that lay on the other side.

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[10] Modern Wicca and pop culture have done much to recast the witch as a sexy young seductress, who practices either a kind of holistic nature magic, or learned magic. An ongoing example of this phenomenon can be found in the popular television shows *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and *Charmed*. Perhaps the most absurd example of marketing appropriation of the witch is found in the short-lived (and all but erased) existence of the Secret Spells Barbie. Mattel describes the toys:

> SECRET SPELLS™ BARBIE® DOLL AND FRIENDS Barbie® doll and her friends Christie® and Kayla® are regular high school girls that have special powers! The dolls have a fashion transformation that turns each of them into an enchantress. Girls can help Barbie® doll and her friends create "magical" mixes for love, luck, or happiness. They can actually drink the magical mixes, too! Each set comes with a mixing spoon, "magic" pot, recipe booklet and two packets of ingredients and a plastic pet, too. <http://service.mattel.com/us/product_detail.asp?id=B2787>

There is something profoundly ironic here, as Barbie is the antithesis of all that early modern English witches represented to their communities.

Accusers and courts found older women easier to arrest, contain, physically exhaust, and bully into confessing. Arthritis, weak backs, and bad knees ensured that these women would succumb to the rigors of walking, sitting, swimming, and pricking more quickly than their younger, healthier counterparts.[11] Temperance Lloyd, tried once in 1671 and again 1682, was no exception. She eventually took the court's version of her history as her own, admitting to all charges laid against her and amending her description of her relationship with her familiar, the 'black man.' Women like Lloyd would, today, likely be diagnosed with cognitive impairment or mental conditions such as Alzheimer's; however, in early modern England they were seen by their peers as suffering from a more diabolic cause.

Although not the oldest woman executed as a witch, Mother Agnes Waterhouse remains a striking example of how the first published witchcraft pamphlet established age as a sign of witchcraft![13] At sixty-four, Mother Waterhouse[14] admitted to practicing witchcraft for fifteen years; during this time she allegedly murdered her husband and several of her neighbors' animals, and destroyed a brewing.[15] Although her age is not made much of in the pamphlet, the treatment received by her daughter, Joan, illustrates the difference between young and old women accused of witchcraft. Joan Waterhouse was eighteen when she was called to testify against her mother, Agnes.[16] Marion Gibson notes that the "pamphleteer of 'Examination' (1566) reports a question by the judge to Joan and her answer, an exchange which suggests exactly the kind of sympathy that might have led to her recorded acquittal, despite her admission that she had given her soul to the devil" (64).

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[11] The suspected witch would literally be walked back and forth in a room. Matthew Hopkins explained that the women themselves would want to pace around the room; the watchers merely kept them walking. If the witch sat down, her familiars would come into the room, scare the watchers, and hurt the witch. Relentlessly walking a witch was a legal way around the English prohibition against torture. See Matthew Hopkins' *The Discovery of Witches* (1647), pp. 6-7. Louise Jackson notes that, "while sleep-deprivation and watching had been clearly used in Suffolk to precipitate confessions, the process was, however, not always necessary. In 12 (13%) of the Suffolk depositions it was reported that the confession had been made 'freely' or 'without watching'" (69). See "Witches, Wives and Mothers: Witchcraft Persecution and Women's Confessions in Seventeenth-Century England" (1995).

[13] There are many instances in which age seems to be the thrust behind the original accusation of witchcraft. Elizabeth Stile (d. 1579) was sixty-five when brought to court. Joan Cony (d. 1589) was executed at eighty years of age. Jane Throckmorton began the series of accusations against Agnes Samuel (d. 1593) by pointing to "the old witch" Mother Samuel and asking her grandmother, "Did you ever see . . . one more like a witch than she is?" (*Warboys* A3). As far as Throckmorton was concerned, looking like an old witch was akin to being one. Mother Sutton (d. 1613) is described as a widow in her "declining years" (*Witches Apprehended* A4). Henry Goodcole writes of Mother Sawyer (d. 1621) that a "great, and long suspicion was held of this person to be a witch" (A4). The proof he brings to the table is primarily physical; although he concludes with an account of her verbal sins, he fills the other two-thirds of his list with a breakdown of her corrupted physiology, which he uses as proof that she is a witch. He notes that "her face was most pale & ghoast-like without any bloud at all, and her countenance was still dejected to the ground," and that "her body was crooked and deformed, even bending together, which so happened but a little before

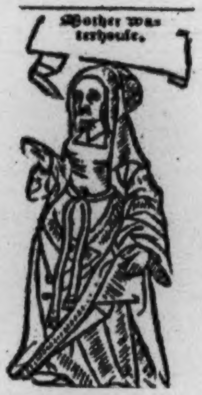

Figure 2: Mother Agnes Waterhouse from The examination, and confession of certaine wytches *(1566)*

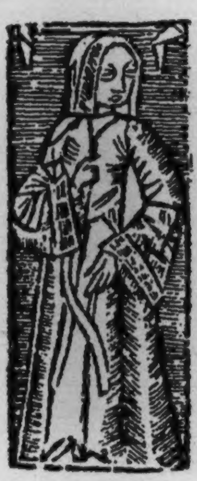

Figure 3: Joan Waterhouse from The examination, and confession of certaine wytches *(1566)*

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her apprehension" (A4v). Although the witchcraft persecutions and publications that appeared after 1640 emphasized a sexualized demonic pact as the defining element of the witch's embodied spirituality, her age continued to be recorded as physical proof of her malfeasance. In *The Lawes Against Witches* (1645), Mother Lakeland confessed to practicing witchcraft for over twenty years (7); Anne Bodenham was eighty years old when she was convicted of witchcraft in 1653.

[14] Her story also maps out elements used to identify future witches: the familiar, the witch's mark, and familiar cross-accusation.

[15] Waterhouse works her *maleficium* with the help of her familiar, Sathan.

[16] Joan established a trend in which children testify against their mothers, as well as the idea that witchcraft is a family affair, a trade which is passed down from mother to daughter. Although children testified against their mothers throughout England's entire recorded history of witch-hunting, only the very young seemed to be able to testify without somehow likewise implicating themselves.

When the Queen's attorney asked, "How wilt thou go before God," Joan answered, "Oh my lord, I trust God will have mercy upon me" (A3v). He replied, "Thou sayest well" (*ibid.*). It could be that Joan's good speaking softened the judge's heart towards her; he may have dismissed her *maleficium* as a one-time occurrence, the desperate move of a hungry young woman. However, the pamphleteer, by including of the woodcuts that depict Joan as young, beautiful, and perhaps even a little arrogant, seems to represent her as using feminine wiles to influence the judge.

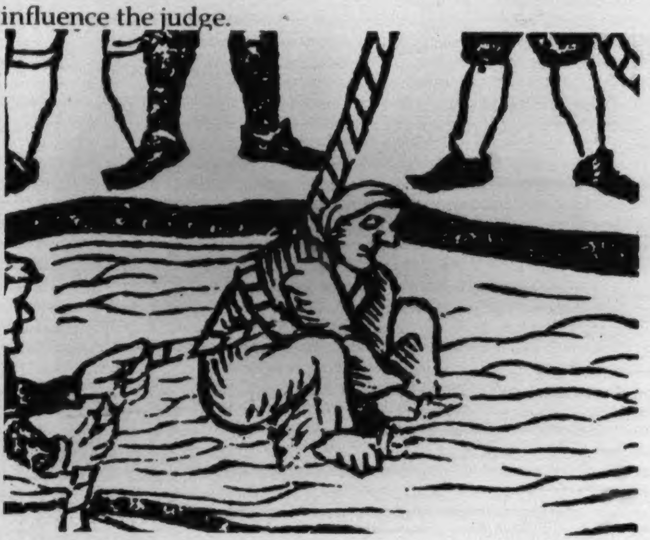

Figure 4a: Swimming Mary Sutton, detail from Witches Apprehended *(1613)*

Bodies under Attack: Swimming, Stripping, Searching, Scratching, and Pricking

Except for her age, physical clues to a woman's malfeasance could be concealed. There were methods, however, of making her body betray irrefutable signs of its alleged demonic allegiance, when submitted to the correct testing. Women were swum, stripped, searched, scratched, and pricked to check for the witch's mark, and to undo magical protective hardness. Although testing was not torture (it was illegal to use torture to extract a confession), in many cases it was humiliating, frightening, brutal, and lethal.

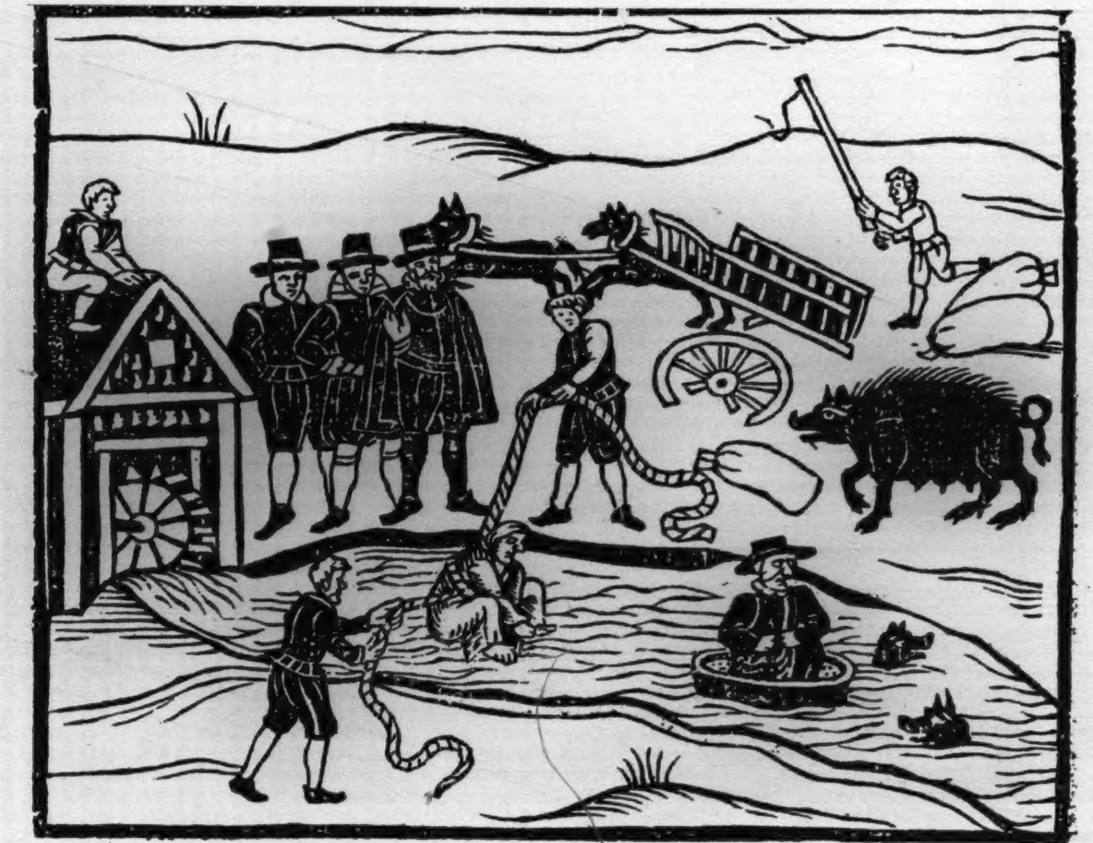

Figure 4b: Full scene from Witches Apprehended *(1613)*

"We All Float Down Here"

James VI of Scotland's *Dæmonologie* (1597) establishes connections between physicality and *maleficium*. The body, he argues, betrays the inner workings of the witch's soul; though her body might look normal, it performs very differently from that of the normal Christian woman: it floats when it should sink.[17] James argues that "God hath appoynted (for a super-naturall signe of the monstruous impietie of the Witches) that the water shal refuse to receive them in her bosom, that have shaken off them the sacred Water of Baptisme, and wilfullie refused the benefite thereof" (80-1). *Witches Apprehended* (1613)[18] elaborates on James' theories with a test provided by a friend of Master Engers. Accused by Engers of stalking him with a black sow, overturning his cart, and injuring his servant and son, Mother Sutton and Mary Sutton found themselves at the mercy of a mob that chose to justify its anger and cruelty through a series of tests, to see if the women would float. The progress of the tests illustrates the three-part process of creating a witch: suspicion, identification of corporeal proof, and rewriting the original justification, based on the success or failure of each part. During the first test, when her legs were left untied, Mary Sutton was thrown in the water and sank two feet before being buoyed up. She was then searched for witch's marks. The legal system did not swim witches, but it did search them; so, by searching Mary Sutton, the mob exonerated itself from charges of cruelty that might have arisen *post facto.* They then swam her again, after witch's marks were found; Sutton was hogtied, right thumb to left toe, left thumb to right toe, and thrown back into the water, where "notwithstanding Master Engers' men standing on each side of the dam with a rope, tossing her up and down to make her sink, but could not" (C3). When proof of her guilt was thus sufficiently established, she was double-bound and swum for a third time. She performed exactly as she should have: bizarrely and unnaturally spinning like a top on the water.[19] Mary Sutton, who "asked them if they could do more to her," confessed only after being told her son had already confirmed that she and her mother were witches and that they had plotted to hurt Master Engers' son. Once in prison, both Mother and Mary Sutton had "many other matters produced against them, of long continuance (for they had remained as before about twenty years) in the prosecution of these lewd and wicked practices" (343).

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[17] Swimming a witch was practiced by binding a woman toe-to-thumb, and throwing her into water to see if she would float ("swim") or sink. Although James is credited, by such shady characters as Matthew Hopkins, for validating the water test, this part of his argument comes on the last two pages of *Dæmonologie*. Rather than giving it the weight of a concluding argument, this position in the book, when it seems to be running out of steam, makes it appear as more of an afterthought.

[18] In *Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe* (2001), James Sharpe argues that the swimming test came "late to England," recorded for the first time in the pamphlet mentioned above (54). Gregory Durston spends considerable time, in *Witchcraft and Witch Trials* (2000), untangling the origins of the English water test, noting that Johan Weyer' s *De Praestigiis Daemonum* (1563) was one of the first texts to mention its use. For more information, see Durston, pp. 302-15. Sharpe proposes that "something like it [the water test] seems to have been used against suspected witches in France by about 1580"; see Sharpe's *Instruments of Darkness* (1996), especially pp. 218-19. In *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (1971), Keith Thomas sees the water test as the reappearance of a part of a series of ordeals devised to detect guilt, a "feature of the judicial ordeal, familiar in England until 1215." The four most common of these were "the hot iron which the victim was required to carry; the boiling water into which he plunged his hand; the 'holy morsel' of consecrated bread and cheese, which he was expected to swallow if innocent and choke on if guilty; and the cold water in which he was immersed and would sink, if innocent" (218).

Three years later, John Cotta's *Triall of witchcraft* (1616) offers a dissenting view of the swimming test (104). Cotta notes that it is "vulgarly credited, that the casting of supposed Witches bound into the water, and the water refusing or not suffering them to sinke within her bosome or bowels, is an infallible detection that such are Witches" (*ibid.*). Cotta questions the rationale behind this legend, hypothesizing that, if no other element (air, fire, or earth) rejects the witch, then water, logically, should not either. He argues that, if the crowd sees a swimming witch as miraculous, then the swimming might be construed as a devilish plot designed to ensnare gullible onlookers.[20]

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[19] In *The Examination, Confession, Trial, and Execution* (1645), Jane Hott asserted that she would sink when thrown into the water. When she floated, she admitted that "the devil went with her all the way and told her she should sinke; but when she was in the water he sat upon a Crosse-beame and laughed at her" (4). Hott could not deny that she had swum on the surface of the water; since witches floated, she had only one available avenue of explanation. She admitted she was a witch, but re-narrated her story to make herself into the unwitting victim of the Devil's deceit.

[20] Almost 11 years later, in *A Guide to Grand-Jury Men* (1627), Richard Bernard dismisses Cotta's reasoning and claims that inarguable proof of Mary Sutton's guilt witch was provided when Master Engers, helped by a mob, swam Sutton, who had already been kidnapped and severely beaten. Bernard recorded the case as one of an encyclopedia of examples of physical signs of

Despite Cotta's reasoning, in the anonymous *Great News from the West of England* (1689), we again see the swimming test (although outlawed in 1645) being used on an elderly woman. This case is an excellent example of the nature of water testing, not only because it clearly illustrates the repeated and progressively more violent testing of the old woman, but also literally throws in a young woman as a quasi-scientific control subject. Not only does the test purport to illustrate the difference between the innocent and the diabolic, it also emphasizes the inherent physical difference between youth and age:

> This old Woman was had to a great River near the Town, to see whether she could sink under Water; her Legs being tied, she was put in, and tho' she did endeavour to the uttermost (by her Hands) to get her self under, yet she could not, but would lie upon her Back, and did Swim like a piece of Cork: There were present above Twenty Persons to Attest the Truth of this, yet could not gain Credit in the minds of People: Therefore, she was had to the Water a second time, and being put in, she swam as at first; and tho' there were present above Two Hundred People to see this Sight, yet it could not be believed by many. At the same time, also, there was put into the Water, a Lusty young Woman, who sunk immediately, and had been drown'd, had it not been for the help that was at hand. To satisfy the World, and to leave no Room for doubting, the old Woman was had down to the Water the third time, and being put in as before, she did still Swim. At this Swimming of her, were present, such a Company of People of the Town and Country, and many of them, Persons of Quality, as could not well be

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witchcraft. He writes that:

> Mary Sutton, the first time bound as before, and then shee swamme like a planke: then was shee searched, and the marke found; and by counsell given him, she was the second time cast into a Mill. damme very deepe, thus bound; her right thumbe to her left toe, and her left thumbe to her right toe, who sate upon the water, and turned round like a wheele, as in a whirlepoole, yet they had her tyed in a rope, lest she should have sunke. (210)

> Numbred; so that now, there is scarce one Person that doubts of the Truth of this thing. (1)

The chronology presented is somewhat confusing; however, the old woman seems to have been swum *before* she was searched and jailed, rather than after. Her ordeal appears to be about establishing beyond any doubt, to the entire community, that this woman was a witch. Why swim her three times? The author claims that it was to satisfy the world of the authenticity of the test, and the validity of the accusation. The accompanying fervor became pitched so high that a bystander could be tossed in to drown, only to illustrate how a normal, lusty, spongy woman would sink where a dry, hardened witch would float. The brief passage above succinctly illustrates the undeniable importance of the witch's public construction. She was a witch because everyone present had seen her float, and, since witches floated, she was undeniably a witch. The tract concludes before the old woman is tried at the assizes, but she has already been accused and tried by the court of common opinion. The text does not require a legal verdict; the woman was guilty in the court of public opinion, because everyone saw her float.[21]

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[21] In 1699, an old, recently widowed woman, was likewise swum in Essex. *A Brief Account of the indisposition of the Widow Coman of Coggeshall magna* (1699) relates Reverend James Boys' account of his interviews with Widow Coman, who was "uneasy and melancholy (as since suggested) upon the accounts of her Husband lately drowned in her well" (204). The story traces her grief-induced madness, culminating with Boys' notation that she was swum three times by a mob led by James Haines. While floating, cork-like, upon the surface of the water, Coman allegedly said, "You see what I am, what need you swim me anymore" (212). Boys had grilled the grieving widow until she admitted to witchcraft; however, the mob was not satisfied until her body corroborated her confession. When Coman died, "by the cold she got in the water, or by some other means," she was searched for witch's marks, which the searches located: "her fundament was open like a mouse hole and in it were too bigges out of which being pressed issued blood . . . excressencies like to bigges with nipples which seemed to have been frequently sucked" (212). The same kind of tragedy occurred in 1684, when Alice Fowler was found "stripped, dead and cold as Clay laying on the Floor on her Back, and having her two great Toes ty'd together, and a Blanket flung over her" (*Strange News* 3). Since her body was still tied for swimming, she had likely been killed when she was swum.

Cry-Baby

Whether through James VI's writings, or through common folk beliefs, the idea that the witch's body would not admit water came to be associated with the idea that it would not weep, either:

> As their eyes are able to shed teares (thretten and torture them as ye please) while first they repent (God not permitting them to dissemble their obstinacie in so horrible a crime) albeit the women kinde especially, be able other-waies to shed teares at every light occasion when they will, yea, although it were dissemblingly like the *Crocodiles.* (James VI 81)

The witch's body does not perform as it should. The witch's embodied spirituality is discernibly unnatural; not only does the water reject her, but also she cannot weep. James argues that women should be able to weep at the slightest provocation. If crying is a sign of femininity, then not being able to cry signifies that the witch has become something other than feminine.[22] The witch's emotional hardness, which makes her impenetrable to water, also renders her unable to produce her own tears. James emphasizes the importance of the performative nature of femininity. All women perform their gender; women who cannot force their bodies to align with the standard performance are obviously witches.[23]

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[22] Witches were able to urinate, however. Collecting a witch's urine and sealing it in a jar or bellarmine (a kind of magic bottle) was supposed to stop her from being able to urinate. Purkiss hypothesizes that, if the witch could not excrete, she could not contaminate, thereby being rendered impotent to harm or injure (125). Terribly uncomfortable, and seeking relief, the witch would come to her supposed victim to unwitch her/him, thereby exposing herself.

[23] Because the witch's diabolic body was unable to cry or sink, it was unnaturally sealed against harm. Penetrating her preternaturally hardened frame, by scratching or stabbing her, was the most visually persuasive means of proving that a woman was a witch. Scratching, stabbing, and searching all seem to have the same origin: the desire to see how the body had been changed by the diabolic pact. Piercing her would undo the witch's protective magic, reducing her to a legible and prosecutable subject. Although few texts explicitly detail prickings, the witch tryer's pin became a symbol of the persecution of women. Scratching a witch was supposed to undo her magic hardness, happily rendering her impotent, malleable, and killable. Making the witch bleed no doubt provided some satisfaction to the supposed victim, as well. In 1593, in the infamous *Warboys* case, Agnes Samuel was scratched by the Throckmorton children. In 1606, Joanne Harrison was scratched by her alleged victim, who was instantaneously cured. Master Avery and his sister scratched *Agnes Browne* and *Joane Vaughan,* but found their relief was temporary. Amy Denny and Rose Cullender were also scratched. The list, sadly, continues. However, because scratching a witch anticipated a physical change in the victim, not the witch herself, this chapter will turn to

Making His Mark

The witch's mark appears in the first published witchcraft case and continues to appear into the 1700s.[23] It evolved from an insensible, invisible spot found by repeated stabbing with a pin, to a mark where imps had supposedly sucked blood, to a nipple-like protrusion located anywhere on the witch's body, and finally, to an actual teat, located in the genital region.[25] The shifting meaning of the witch's mark signifies the shift in the popular and legal understandings of the witch's embodied spirituality.[26] James Sharpe

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the searching for the witch's mark, rather than focus on this, or any other aspects of popular witch testing.

[24] Diane Purkiss suggests that the search for the witch's mark represents a pseudo-scientific field of enquiry, which replaced the production of truth through torture seen in most European contexts. For more information, see *The Witch in History* (1996), p. 341. In *Witchfinders* (2005), Malcolm Gaskill notes that William Harvey was brought into the Lancashire witch trials to examine the accused for witch's marks. "Assisted by a team of seven surgeons and ten midwives," Harvey found nothing on the first three women, and concluded that the two marks on Margaret Johnson were natural (46-7).

[25] The form of the mark changed from an insensible mark, to a bloody spot, to an inch-long protrusion of flesh, located in the genitals, which, when squeezed, would issue white, milky matter--both a teat and a phallus. For more information, see James Shape's *Instruments of Darkness* (1996), pp. 72-3. There are, of course, exceptions.

[26] In his *A Guide to Grand Jury Men* (1627), Bernard composes a list of women identified by witch's marks, to act as precedents for future cases:

> This league being thus made and sealed, hee hath a sacrifice offered unto him of some, and of others some (as of their ordinary Witches) hee desireth to sucke bloud: for hee will have his Covenant sealed with bloud one way or other. Hee sucketh in divers parts of the body, as on the crowne of the head, as the boyes of Bradley: on the brests under the paps, as Alizon Devices: on the thighes, as Mother Suttons and Marie her daughters: under the right eare, as Joane Willimots: under the left flancke, as Hellen Greenes: the necke, as Philip Flowers: in the secret parts, as Margret Flowers: the chinue, as Mother Samuels of Warboys. Thus the divels chuse their sucking places, as they lease; which they doe, as some have confessed at the change, or full of the Moone, or when they are set on worke by the Witches. Besides this sucking, they leave markes upon them, sometimes like a blue spot, as it was on Alizon Device: or like a little teate, as it was on Mother Sutton and her daughter, of Milton Milles in Bedfordshire. These markes are not onely, nor alwayes in the sucking place, for the marke was not on Mother Samuels chinne of Warboys, but they bee often in other very hidden places, as under the eyebrowes, within the lips, under armepits, on the right shoulders, thigh, flanke, in the secret parts, and seate. Some indeed have but one, as old Dembdike: some have two, as Chattox, Joane Flower, and Willimot: some three, as one Arthur Bill: some nine, as Mother Samuels of Warboys. (Bernard 107-110).

argues that "it was obviously not a very large step to equate the witch's mark, already an established part of beliefs about witchcraft, with the place from which the familiar sucked blood" (73). Although its insensibility and bizarre forms[27] were part of the continental tradition, in English tracts, the mark's insensibility was secondary to its importance as the location from which the familiar continually took blood (*ibid.*). By sucking from the witch's mark, the familiar continually renewed its demonic compact.[28] The mutable form, location, and function of the witch's mark likewise signified the subtle displacement of the witch as an agent of the Devil,[29] to a pseudo-imp-mother, to, finally, a demonic lover. The stories told about the witch were just stories until the witch's mark was found; once it was, the witch then brought her narrative in line, retelling her own story to reflect the kinds of accusations brought against her. In many cases, the discovery of corporeal proof[30] was too conclusive to deny; the witch had to find a way to tell her story within a new framework, or risk having it told for her.

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[27] Sharpe argues that the continental witch's mark was believed to be an imprint of the Devil's teeth, or in the form of a toad or spider. See *Instruments of Darkness* (1996), pp. 72-3. Although the witch's mark does not usually have a representational shape in English cases, Helen Jenkensen was accused of somehow transferring similar symbols onto "Mistris *Moulshoes* Smocke," which the maid recounted was "all bespotted with the pictures of Toades, Snakes, and other ougly Creatures, which making her agast" Mistress Moulshoe, being a "gentlwoman of a stout courage, went immediately to the house of the sayd *Helen Jenkenson*, and with an angry countenance told her of this matter, threatning her that if her Linnen were not shortly cléered from those foule spots, she would scratch out both her eyes: and so not staying for any answere went home, and found her linnen as white as it was at first" (D2). The continental idea of the witch's mark had obviously made it to England; Mistress Moulshoe believed that Helen Jenkensen could bewitch her, or perhaps even make her into a witch, by tainting her clothing. Curiously, the spots appearred on Mistress Moulshoe's smock after she had finally found "at the last that which they sought for to their great amazement": the insensible witch's mark on Helen Jenkensen's body (Bv). The details of an invisible, insensible spot do not make for great story-telling, so the discovery is underplayed with these few words. The grisly discovery of the spotted clothing seems, however, to make up for the lack of narrative tension elsewhere, and is given far more space. Jenkensen dies proclaiming her innocence; there was no real physical proof to define her.

[28] That Mary Smith (Glover) made an oral contract, rather than a blood pact, is significant enough to show up in the title of the tract (*A treatise of witchcraft ... With a true narration of the witchcrafts which Mary Smith, wife of Henry Smith glouer, did practise: of her contract vocally made between the Deuill and her, in solemne termes*), and also to be noted in *The Wonderful Discovery of the Witch-crafts of Margaret and Phillip Flower*(1618), in its list of precedents.

[29] Like most early modern English witches, Joan Prentice, who confessed to using her satanic ferret Bidd for *maleficium*, feeding it at first from her finger, then from her left cheek, emphasizes the economic exchange of blood for labour found in many tracts. Although women admitted to feeding their imps, the exchange did not take on the maternal or sexualized elements which became notorious in later cases.

In 1566, Elizabeth Francis claimed she repeatedly pricked herself, offering her blood as a reward to her cat, Sathan, for committing crimes at her behest; "where she pricked her selfe there remayned a red spot, which was styl to be sene" (A6v). Mother Waterhouse likewise pricked herself on her hands and face, "the spots of all the which pricks are yet to be sene in her skin" (B). Neither Elizabeth Francis[31] nor Agnes Waterhouse emphasized the witch's marks which remained on their skin after these blood exchanges; it was John Phillips, author of *The Examination and Confession of certaine wytches at Chensforde* , who noted that these marks remained visible, defining the importance of the witch/imp relationship. The imp was the active agent in the *maleficium*; this relationship leaves evidence.

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[30] Mother Samuel confessed to letting her familiar, White, suck on her chin. When Samuel was searched after her death, she evidently had "a little Lump of Flesh, like a Teat, about half an Inch long...near her Private Parts.... The Jaylor's Wife squeezing it with her Hand, a Mixture of yellowish Milk and Water issued out of it, then clear Milk, and at last Blood it self" (*A Compleat History* 173). Mother and Mary Sutton supposedly had two teats on their thighs, "found out afterward by enquiry and search of women"; although their location suggests sexualization, the women's voices remain mute on this topic (Cv). Margaret and Phillip Flower introduce the mixture of inverted maternity and sexuality into their confession. Margaret Flower was first examined on January 22, 1618, and Phillip Flower was brought in to testify against her sister on February 4th. Margaret was again examined on February 25, by which time her confession began with the admission that she had imps and fed them from her left breast. Examined at the same time, Phillip recounted that she too had two imps, one fed from her left breast, and one fed from "within the inward parts of her secrets" (G).

[31] In *A detection of damnable driftes* (1579), Elizabeth Francis appears again, this time confirming that Mother Osborne,

> a Widowe in the same toune to be a witche, and that she hath a marke in the endeof one of her fingers like a pitt, and an other marke uppon the outside of her right legge, whiche she thinketh to bee pluckt out by her Spirit: and that one Mother Waterhouse her owne sister (long since executed for Witch crafte) had the self same markes, whithe she termeth (nippes). (A5)

Francis, who confessed before, but escaped persecution, established herself as an authority on witches because she was able to recognize the physical indicators that signified a diabolic pact; they were the ones her own sister had. Although women often testified against each other, Francis claimed the authority of a witch-finder; in this case, the witch was constructed in the hands of another alleged witch. Francis not only knew that the mark was an element which could not be refuted, but assumed the authority to name witches based on this evidence.

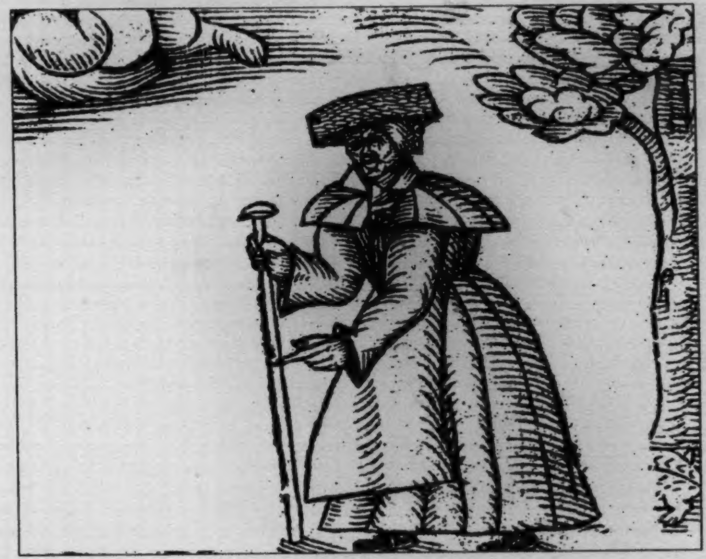

Figure 5: Mother Sawyer from The wonderfull discouerie of Elizabeth Sawyer *(1621)*

By April 14th, 1621, when Elizabeth Sawyer was arraigned for the death of Agnes Ratcliefe, some of her neighbors (who remain anonymous in the text) gave the court information that Sawyer had a "private and strange marke on her body" (B3). Since there is no mention that Sawyer had a familiar, the declaration that she would have a witch's mark seems to have been based on the presumption she was a witch. The mark's location may have been chosen in an attempt to humiliate Sawyer, to justify why it had not been seen before, or some combination of the two. The judge decided to have Sawyer searched before jury deliberations, as the discovery of a mark would surely decide the case against her. Three women were quickly and conveniently found; they searched Sawyer, and graphically testified about a witch's mark they had found on her body.[32] Though Sawyer denied that she had any such mark, it seemed perfectly logical to the jury that a witch would both have a witch's mark, and be a liar. This "gave some insight to the Jury, of her: who upon their consciences returned the said *Elizabeth Sawyer,* to be guilty, by diabolicall help, of the death of *Agnes Ratcliefe* onely, and acquitted her of the other two Inditements" (B3v). By April 17th, Sawyer had been convicted and had categorically changed her story. She admitted to having a mark "a little above [her] fundament" (C3). The Devil chose the spot, "and in that place by continuall drawing, there is a thing in the forme of a Teate, at which the diuell would sucke mee. And I asked the Diuell why hee would sucke my bloud, and hee sayd it was to nourish him" (C3-C3v). This confession is remarkable in its illustration of the transition from witch marks to teats as the symbol of demonic pact. Sawyer had to bring her identity in line with her new subjectivity as a convicted witch.[33] She retells her story in terms of inverted maternity: she had blood forcibly taken from a teat above her anus by a devil dog, and later murdered two children.[34]

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[32] The women testified that:

> a little above the Fundiment of Elizabeth Sawyer the prisoner, there indited before the Bench for a Witch, found a thing like a Teate the bignesse of the little finger, and the length of halfe a finger, which was branched at the top like a teate, and seemed as though one had suckt it, and that the bottome thereof was blew, and the top of it was redde. This view of theirs, and answere that she had such a thing about her, which boldly shee denied (B3v).

There is a two-decade gap between Sawyer's confession and the next resurgence of witchcraft pamphlets. During this period, Marianne Hester argues, based on the influence of Bernard's *Guide to Grand-jury men* and Michael Dalton's *The Country Justice,* "magistrates recommended that the pre-trials body search for witch's marks be 'focused upon the genital area'" (280).[35] Within this period, the demonic pact, performed through an inverted maternity and sexuality, became standard. The witch's mark had become a nipple and a phallus, and the witch's body, an increasingly sexualized access point that was constantly exploited to renew the demonic pact and the witch's damnation.[36] The witch became a hermaphrodite and a chimera; her moral and spiritual corruption made her into a monster.

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[33] Sawyer may have been trying to provide Goodcole with the testimony he wanted to hear; the questions he asked were sufficiently leading to prompt her to provide the anticipated response.

[34] Sawyer was acquitted of murdering the children. She may have been attempting to illustrate judicial errors by refusing to admit to the crimes she was convicted of, and admitting to those she was not.

[35] In "Patriarchal Reconstruction and Witch-Hunting," Marianne Hester argues that the "sexualization of the witches' mark was made especially apparent after 1630, with the publication of the fourth-edition of *The Country Justice* by lawyer and JP, Michael Dalton. In this, Dalton cites Bernard 'with enthusiastic approval', but also changes Bernard's insistence that witches' marks may be found anywhere – although in 'very hidden places' – to a more explicit focus on the genitals (280). For Hester's full argument, see *Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe: Studies in Culture and Belief* (1996), pp. 288-306.

[36] In 1674, Anne Foster's witch's marks were graphically described as "five several strange and unusual excrescences which appeared exactly like a Sows Teats, and seemed to be usually suckt by something" (*Full and True* 4). Foster confessed after this alleged discovery, but the tract does not depict her making any reference to the witch's mark. When Alice Fowler's body was searched after her murder, as "several of the Neighbours were so curious to search the Corps, and do all of them affirm that they found in the private parts of the Corps five Teats; to wit, four small ones and one

The anonymous author of *The Lawes against Witches, and Conjuration* (1645) paraphrases Richard Bernard's *Guide to grand-jury men* (1627) to assert that witches

> hath some big or little teat upon their body, where he sucketh them; and besides their sucking, the Devil leaveth other markes upon their bodies, sometimes like a Blew-spot, or Redspot, like a flea-biting, sometimes the flesh sunck in and hollow, all which for a time may be covered, yea taken away, but will come again to their old forme. (4)

It is notable that the order here has been changed to emphasize the witch's mark as a nipple. Bernard had only one case where teats were mentioned, those allegedly on Mother and Mary Sutton; he likewise mentions the marks before the teats (111-2). This subtle but crucial change illustrates the contemporary understanding of the witch's mark.[37] Being a witch permanently changed a woman physically; she grew new body parts. Although these were often described as teats, they functioned like phalli, giving women a monstrous, masculine power over the world around them.

By 1645, "some of the more elaborate notions were beginning to take hold (perhaps disseminated by Matthew Hopkins himself) and the Suffolk trials refer directly to the making of covenants and sexual activity with the Devil" (Jackson 71). Matthew Hopkins, who influenced many of the witchcraft cases of 1645, was responsible for crystallizing the understanding of the witch's mark as a nipple, as well as for introducing sex into the English witchcraft myth. In "Desire and Deformity," Purkiss argues that, for Hopkins,

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very big, and that they were all of them as black as a Coal" (*Strange News*). This udder, like Foster's, makes Fowler bestial, but also seems to operate in the text as justification for her murder: she was so much a witch, that she could feed a litter of imps at once. The blackness of the marks also alludes to their corruption.

[37] Curiously, Mother Lakeland, the focus of the only specific case covered in the tract, does not claim to have a witch's mark, nor is one purported to be found on her after her death. In fact, like Joan Williford, Lakeland claims to have made a written blood compact with the Devil. As Lakeland was a "witch (as she confessed) for the space of near twenty years," this detail aligns her with an earlier understanding of a less physically intrusive pact, and the more contractual arrangement seen in earlier texts (*Laws Against* 7).

> the witch mark becomes a way to know a woman's body, to make it speak of what it has done. But it is not enough. She must also be naked, and naked, made to speak. This desire for absolute nakedness, and hence for absolute disgust, is channeled through discourses of Puritan confession and testimony, discourses of confession as a cutting open of what was problematically hard and solid. (122)

The witch's performance of embodied spirituality involves the presence and displaying of the witch's mark; it is what exposes and defines her as a witch. As Purkiss notes, however, this embodied performance is insufficient. Women must bring their confession into line, strip their past naked, and retell their stories, opening their histories to the viewer's gaze.

Within *A True and Exact Relation of the severall Informations* (1645), the *Information of Elizabeth Hunt and Priscilla Brigs* sets Mary Greenleife up as a witch, exposing the interpretive process by which women found themselves constructed (16). Greenleife's story references her witch's mark, but she attempts to create an alternate meaning for the physical proof allegedly found on her.[38] Elizabeth Hunt and Priscilla Brigs testify:

> that being by the said Justices imployed to search the said Mary Greenleife, upon suspect for being a Witch, these Informants found that the said Mary had bigges or teates in her secret parts, not like Emerods, nor in those places where women use to be troubled with them; and that they verily beleeve, these teates are sucked by her Impes; for that these Informants have been formerly imployed to search other women suspected for Witchcraft, who

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[38] Greenleife's story, which appears in *A True and Exact Relation* (1645), along with Anne Clark and Rebbecca West's confessions, seems to be part fairy tale. Susan Sparrow's testimony against Greenleife includes a strangely lyrical episode, in which she recalls saying:

> Good-wife Greenleife, Good-wife Greenleife, if your childe be asleepe, awaken it, for if any body comes by, and heare it make such moane (you having an ill name already) they will say, You are suckling your Impes upon it: Whereupon the said Mary replyed; I doe so indeed, and I will feed with them (meaning her said Impes,) that they shall suck my daughter one night, and thine another. (15)

This odd moment, featuring the kind of repetitive invocation seen in fairy tales, establishes the surreal nature of the moment, but also enables Sparrow to act as a character witness, proving what a bad mother Greenleife was.

> have had the like bigges, and have afterwards confessed themselves to be Witches.(16)

When asked about the witch's marks allegedly found on her body, Greenleife responded, "she knows not unlesse she were born with them; but she never knew she had any such untill this time, they were found in those parts upon the said search; And she does deny that ever she had any Impe sucked on these teat" (17). As to her alleged imp, "she does confesse she hath seen a Leveret[39] once sitting before her doore within a yard of the threshold; and that she wondered much at it, being about noon time as she remembreth" (*ibid.*). Greenleife's confession ends with her assertion that "she is not guilty of any accusation charged upon her this Examinant" (*ibid.*).

Elizabeth Hunt and Priscilla Brigs understood that physical proof is irrefutable. They had searched women who, presumably, protested their innocence until the witch's marks were found. Wise enough to know that the searchers' word would triumph over that of an alleged witch, Greenleife did not deny having marks, but instead claimed ignorance of them until that day.[40] In her only other available move, Greenleife likewise admitted to seeing the leveret, which she is accused of keeping as an imp in an attempt to reconcile her truth with the stories told about her.[41]

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[39] The OED defines a leveret as a "young hare, strictly one in its first year." Ironically, it alternately offers definitions of a leveret as pet, a mistress, or spiritless person. This young rabbit is a familiar, a spirit, and a garden pest all at once.

[40] Bridget Reynolds, who examined Sarah Hating, Elizabeth Harvy, and Marion Hocket, claimed that "Sarah Hating had foure Teats, or Bigges in those parts, almost an inch long, and as bigge as this Informants little finger: That the said Elizabeth Harvy had three such Bigges, and about the said scantling: And that the said Marian Hocket had no such Bigges" (26). Although Hocket and Hating denied all charges against them, Harvy, who never actually admitted to witchcraft, did admit to receiving three "things" from Hocket, and later admitted to having pain in her genitals where the marks were found. To explain away the corporeal proof, Harvy cast herself as an unwilling dupe who received imps, but got no benefit from them; she was the victim of witchcraft rather than the purveyor.

[41] Rose Cullender, when asked in 1664 if she was "contented that they should search her?" claimed she did not "oppose it." The results of the search were alarming:

> Stripped from the head down in the lower part of her Belly they found a thing like a Teat of an Inch long, they questioned her about it, and she said, That she had got a strain by carrying of water which caused that Excrescence. But upon narrower search, they found in her Privy Parts three more Excrescencies or Teats, but smaller than the former ... the long Teat at the end thereof there was a little hole, and it appeared unto them as if it had

Whores and Mothers

The witch's embodied spirituality eventually evolved into that of a sexual partner. Within the first few lines of his testimony, Hopkins introduces Elizabeth Clark as both a mother to imps and a mistress to the Devil.[42] Hopkins testified that Clark confessed that

> she had had carnall copulation with the Devil six or seven yeares; and that he would appeare to her three or foure times in a weeke at her bed side, and goe to bed to her, and lye with her halfe a night together in the shape of a proper Gentleman, with a laced band, having the whole proportion of a man, and would say to her, Besse I must lye with you, and shee did never deny him (2)

Clark's testimony is far more vague and benign; she testified that "two things came into this Examinants bed every night, or every other night, and sucked upon the lower parts of her body," and assured her that "they would doe her no hurt, but would helpe her to an Husband, who should maintaine her ever after" (6). Although some of the basic frame for her story is the same (bi-nightly visitations and the mention of a husband), Clark's own confession locates the demonic pact six months, not six years, prior to her trial. The imps

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> been lately sucked, and upon the straining of it there issued out white milkie Matter. (*Tryal* 35-37).

In the text, Cullender is not given an opportunity to respond to this new discovery; one wonders if she were really given the option of refusing the search. This milking of the witch's mark both animalizes Cullender and is strangely and disturbingly masturbatory.

[42] *The most strange and admirable discovery of the three Witches of Warboys* (1593) touches on the kind of demonic sexual union seen in the Hopkins trial and subsequent cases. At nearly eighty of age, when asked "what she had to say for herself to stay judgment," Mother Alice Samuel answered "that she was with child" (D2v). Although the company, and Samuel herself, evidently began laughing, she was examined anyway; her searchers could find no evidence of this pregnancy. Samuel did testify, however, that William Langland, the man who supposedly gave her her familiars, had "carnal knowledge of her body when she received them" (D3). The tract concludes that "some are of the opinion that it was the Devil in a man's likeness" (*ibid.*). At least "some" of those in the courtroom were ready to believe that only the Devil would want to have sex with an eighty-year-old woman, and that this act made sense in terms of incorporating her body into the demonic pact. Samuel would have had to sell more than her soul to receive her imps; the exploitation of the body is read as a metaphor for the corruption of the soul. Mother Samuel has been thoroughly ravished. However, Samuel herself offered this piece of information; she may have been trying to portray herself as an unwitting victim, of both spiritual and sexual assault. Another prisoner allegedly encouraged Samuel to plead her belly. "'Nay,' she said "'that will I not do; it shall never be said I was both a witch and a whore'" (*ibid.*)

promised her a husband, as imps are apt to do in many cases; they do not provide her with Satan dressed up like a gentleman for her husband. She also mentioned only two entities (not the five familiars Hopkins claimed she had), as well as two of Anne West's that she was caring for. Clark clearly resisted aligning her embodied spirituality with Hopkins' new version of the witch.

Rebecca West, the keystone of Hopkins' case, confessed, escaped persecution, and provided a model of embodied spirituality onto which Hopkins attempted to map other witches. Her confession, recorded in at least two tracts, illustrates the completion of the sexual and malefic union. According to Hopkins, West confessed that she had married and consummated her union with the Devil.[43] This confession, like Hopkins' desire to discover a coven, introduced a continental flair into the English witch hunt. However, based on Hopkins' treatment of West's alleged sexual revelation,[44] distinctive English elements, like the witch's mark, became sexualized, and oral and vaginal sex with the Devil became the means of renewing a demonic pact.

Seven years late, in 1652, Anne Ashbey and Anne Martyn[45] confessed that the "devill had known them carnally and that they had had no hurt by it" (*Prodigious* A2). They became grossly swollen during the trial, experiencing a kind of supernatural pregnancy in which Ashbey birthed her familiar, Rug, from her mouth.[46] After this experience, both women pleaded their bellies, claiming they were pregnant with the Devil's children (A2v). Although they could not confirm or deny that they had been possessed by the

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[43] *The full tryals, examination, and condemnation of four notorious witches at the assizes held at Worcester* (1690) notes that West had familiarity with the Devil. It also includes Hopkins' assertion that West had married the Devil, but omits mention of their sexual union.

[44] In *A true and exact relation* (1645), West's own testimony does not include mention of a sexual relationship with the Devil.

[45] These intriguing spiritual pregnancies are usually seen with the victims of witchcraft, not with the witches themselves. Ashbey and Martyn's stories are third-party narrations, found within *A prodigious & tragicall history of the arraignment, tryall, confession, and condemnation of six witches at Maidstone, in Kent, at the assizes there held in July, Fryday 30. this present year* (1652).

[46] For an analysis of inverted maternity, see: Susan C. Staub's *Nature's Cruel Stepdames: Murderous Women in Street Literature of Seventeenth Century England* (2005), pp. 41-82; Mary E. Fissel, *Vernacular Bodies* (2004), pp. 52-89; and Garthine Walker's *Crime, Gender and the Social Order in Early Modern England* (2003), pp. 148-58]. For specific information on witchcraft and maternity, see: Walter

Devil, after swelling into a "monstrous and vast bigness," Ashbey and Martyn recreated their identities based on the physical evidence the court had against them. They had had sex with the Devil; their bodies were swollen; therefore, they were pregnant.[47]

In *A True and Impartial Relation* (1682), Temperance Lloyd, Mary Trembles, and Susanna Edwards' confessions contain the sexualized witch's mark and the demonic sexual union, the complete demonic possession of the witch. Mary Trembles

> confesseth, That after that she had made this Bargain with the said Susanna Edwards, that the Devil in the shape of a Lyon (as she conceived) did come to this Examinant, and lay with her, and had carnal knowledge of her Body. And that after the Devil had had knowledge of her Body, that he did suck her in her Secret parts, and that his sucking was so hard, which caused her to cry out for the pain thereof. (34)

It is clear Trembles' witch's mark cannot be thought of in terms of inverted maternity;[48] it is a practice in demonic bestiality. This is obviously not only Trembles' construction. The examiners coached Trembles; when asked how "many times the Devil had had the carnal knowledge of her Body besides the time above-mentioned; She saith and confesseth, That

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Stephen's *Demon Lovers" Witchcraft, Sex, and the Crisis of Belief* (2002), pp. 241-299, in which he argues that "infant mortality was one of the most powerful catalysts for anxiety about witches–the witch took the life the mother created; and Deborah Willis' *Malevolent Nurture* (1995), which claims that maternal power was "likely to be experienced as dangerous or anger provoking to children" who were "already subject to persecutory anxiety" (69, 73). For Willis' argument on anxieties on mothering and female power, see her chapter "The Witch and the Early Modern Mother," pp. 65-81; see also Louise Jackson's "Witches, Wives and Mothers: Witchcraft Persecution and Women's Confessions in Seventeenth-Century England" (1995), pp. 63-83. Jackson argues that "infanticide [was] a crime which has recently been associated with post-partum psychosis but which, in seventeenth-century England, was seen as the work of the devil. Again it was a subversion of the normal 'motherly' female role" (74).

[47] The difference is that a spiritual pregnancy does not offer the same kind of corporeal proof that a witch's mark offers. So why plead pregnancy? Ashbey and Martyn may have thought it would buy them some time. Ashbey appeared to have been filibustering when she "uttered many speeches" (A3).

[48] Curiously, Edwards recounts that the Devil first appeared to her in the shape of a gentleman, and later, there was "something in the shape of a little Boy, which she thinks to be the Devil, came into her house and did lie with her, and that he did suck her at her breast" (36).

the Devil hath had the carnal knowledge of her Body three other times" (35). However, at the gallows, Trembles changed her story, twice claiming that she had "spoke the very truth, and [could] speak no more" (37-38); the truth was now that she had done none of the things she had earlier confessed to.

> H. Did he give thee any Gift, or didst thou make him any Promise?
>
> Mary. No.
>
> H. Had he any of thy bloud?
>
> Mary. No.
>
> H. Did he come to make use of thy Body in a carnal manner?
>
> Mary. Never in my life.
>
> H. Have you a Teat in your Privy-parts?
>
> Mary. None. The Grand Inquest said it was sworn to them. (38)

Why would Trembles change her confession at the gallows? The searchers obviously found no evidence that she had a witch's mark. Without physical proof, she was able to reconstruct her embodied spirituality as that of an innocent and chaste woman. She had participated in neither a sexual nor an economic union with the Devil, because her body did not prove she had.

The gallows confession also provided Temperance Lloyd[49] with an ultimate stage upon which she could rewrite her stories and recreate her embodied spirituality. Anne Wakely searched Lloyd, and found in her "secret Parts two Teats hanging nigh together like unto a piece of Flesh that a Child had suckt. And that each of the said Teats was about an Inch in length" (11). She asked Lloyd "whether she had been suckt at that place by the black Man? (meaning the Devil)" (11). Lloyd acknowledged that "she had been suck'd there often times by the black Man; and the last time that she was suck'd by the said black Man was the Friday before she was search'd" (*ibid.*). She later admitted that the black man did "suck her Teats which she now hath in her Secret Parts ... [and] did suck her again as she was lying down; and that his sucking was with a great pain unto her" (15). Following the lead of her examiners, Lloyd compulsively confessed to new and old crimes. However, following Trembles' precedent, Lloyd's gallows confession reneged on her rapid acquiescence to the charges brought against her, and she not only made herself over into the victim of a violent head trauma for refusing to obey the Devil, but also denied that she ever had a contract with him, gave him blood, or had sex with him. Lloyd may have only been following the leader, as she had throughout this trial; however, in her final words, she refuted the alleged physical proof and retold her own story.

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[49] Temperance Lloyd was accused, in 1679, of hurting Anne Fellow and causing her death. Her "body was then searched by four Women of the Town of Biddiford aforesaid, and the Proofs then against her not so clear and conspicuous, the said Mr. Fellow did not further prosecute against her" (*A True and Impartial Relation* 17). Without corporeal proof, Lloyd was able to avoid a formal charge. However, when this case was brought up in light of both new accusations and physical proof, Lloyd confessed that "the said black Man or Devil, (or some other black Man or Devil) with her this said Examinant, did do some bodily hurt to the said Anne Fellow, and that thereupon the said Anne Fellow did shortly die and depart this life" (*ibid.*).

The presence of sex acts in witchcraft confessions was more than a nod to continental influences: it was the logical, final step in establishing how fully Satan possessed the witch. Ironically, this most stimulating of confessions left the least physical evidence. Why would women confess to an unprovable act? Although the same kinds of discursive pressures applied to this confession as to all others, confessing to having sex with Satan appears to be a final surrender of agency. The accused is made to turn herself inside out for the state, exposing her most intimate secrets. Women have little identity beyond that of witch, once they confess to having conjugal relations with the Devil.

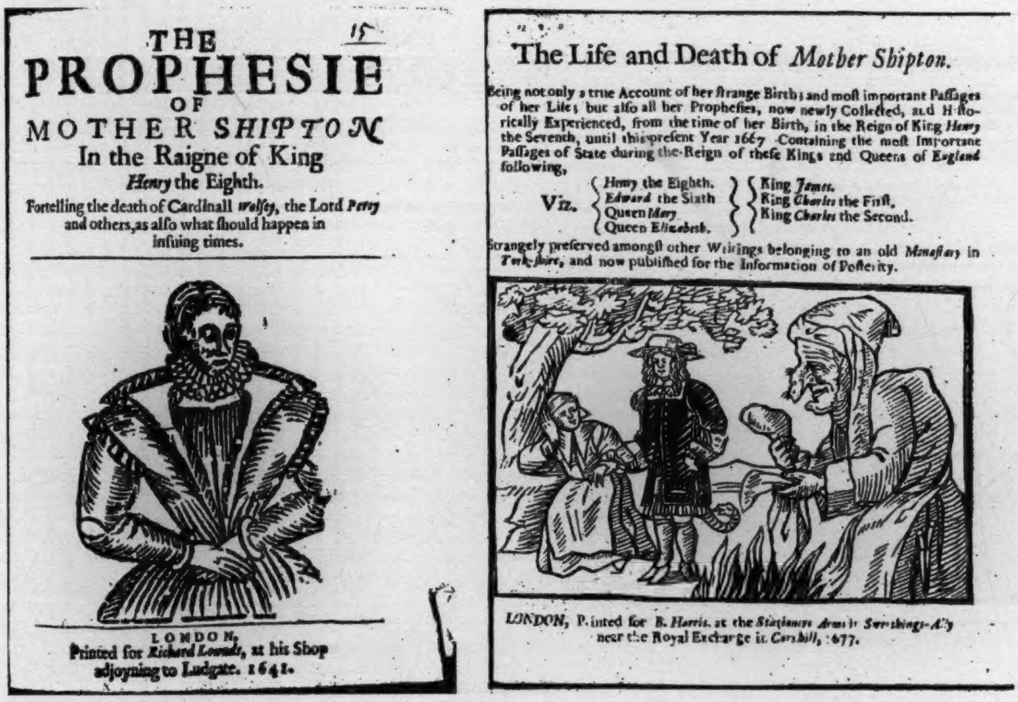
The body of the witch, whether young and old, told irrefutable stories. Although conclusions about a woman's embodied spirituality could be made merely by looking at her, more often than not, the body was forcibly made to speak. Narratives were produced through reading lines on the face, the way bodies moved on the water, how and where women bled, and whether their bodies had superfluous parts. Although some women attempted to fight the manner in which their bodies were being interpreted, many women came to fall in line with the local interpretation of the corporeal proof used against them. Women became witches when their bodies said they were.

Prophetic Panaceas?

What can a study of the witch's malefic embodied spirituality tell us about the prophet? Parallels between the witch's physicality and the prophet's are multiple. When her prophecies attracted the attention of her peers, the prophet's body was (re)interpreted to align with the demonic and divine, and she was written into the appropriate spiritual teleology. As in most spiritual narratives, diabolical or divine, select past occurrences were emphasized as signposts of the prophet's future position; disobedience, blasphemy, intense feelings of shame, and spiritual battles, were all part of a classic conversion narrative. Embodied spirituality had real, physical consequences: the body which was attacked on the spiritual and physical plane was meant to recall its war stories and display its battle scars. The prophet's body was searched for the corporeal markers which would signify its special spiritual state.

Women of diverse ages and economic and social statuses prophesied. The young, prone, innocent prophet, fretted over by her mother and transcribed by a patriarchal editor, became a symbol of hope, innocence, and an earthly proximity to some eternal truth. The prophet's body, like the witch's, became a symbol of her closeness to God and his continued participation in his creation. The prophet's embodied spirituality authorized her prophetic claims through physical markers: ineffective attempts at self-destruction, fasting, inedia, amenorrhea, and trances. Embodied spirituality vested the prophet with a corporeality that exceeded or transcended natural human limits; her body became an antenna receiving God's signals. She was watched closely by onlookers, whose urgency to understand what was happening was followed closely by their desire to see it as symbolic. Prophetic bodies ached, suffered, starved, and wept with miraculous fervor, and the physical manifestation of their experiences was part of their message.

The dark side of embodied spirituality, however, made the prophet vulnerable to being read, appropriated, and deconstructed. In lining up the prophet's embodied spirituality next to the witch's, it becomes apparent that, although the physical intensity of her spirituality brought the prophet closer to God, it could also make her vulnerable to being read as firmly vested in fallen flesh. Where prophets exploited maternity's positive symbolic value, those who criticized prophetic and devout sectarian mothers focused on equating anomalous birth defects with aberrant thought. If the witch was mother to the familiar, the prophet was mother to the monster. Physical and emotional attacks made missionaries into martyrs, illustrating the essential vulnerability of the prophet's body. As the legal system hung the witch to kill the Devil in effigy, those who were convinced a prophet was false tried to silence prophecies by injuring the prophesier.



15

THE
PROPHESIE
OF
MOTHER *SHIPTON*
In the Raigne of King
Henry the Eighth.
Fortelling the death of Cardinall *Wolſey*, the Lord *Percy*
and others, as alſo what ſhould happen in
inſuing times.

LONDON,
Printed for *Richard Lownds*, at his Shop
adjoyning to Ludgate. 1641.

The Life and Death of *Mother Shipton.*

Being not only a true Account of her ſtrange Birth; and moſt important Paſſages of her Life; but alſo all her Propheſies, now newly Collected, and Hiſtorically Experienced, from the time of her Birth, in the Reign of King *Henry* the Seventh, until this preſent Year 1667. Containing the moſt Important Paſſages of State during the Reign of theſe Kings and Queens of *England* following,

Viz.
Henry the Eighth.
Edward the Sixth
Queen *Mary*
Queen *Elizabeth*.
King *James*.
King *Charles* the Firſt,
King *Charles* the Second.

Strangely preſerved amongſt other Writings belonging to an old *Monaſtery* in *York-ſhire*, and now publiſhed for the Information of Poſterity.

LONDON, Printed for *B. Harris*, at the *Stationers Arms* in *Sweethings-Alley* near the Royal Exchange in *Cornhill*, 1677.

Figure 6: Two portrayals of Mother Shipton. 1642 (l) and 1677 (r).

Mother Shipton's embodied spirituality was powerfully unidentifiable. Her prophecies were ultimately appropriated by authors who, tantalizingly, propose that her predictive skill and bodily deformities illustrate an otherworldly or demonic heritage. For readers of, and believers in, Shipton's prophecies, witchcraft and prophecy become titillatingly blurry from a centennial distance: Mother Shipton (d. 1561) prophesied before the reign of King Henry VIII, but was not published as a prophet until 1641.[50] Shipton's prophecies were reprinted in the following decade,[51] and by the late 1660s, they were accompanied by biographies which began to emphasize Shipton's embodied spirituality as much as her prophetic skill. By 1677, Richard Head prefaced her prophecies with a fantastically detailed autobiography.[52] He argues that her mother married a devil, was given witch's marks, and became deformed and drained of her life force by the consummation of their union. He notes the details of Mother Shipton's portentous and monstrous shape at birth, the Devil's regular visits to her in the shape of animal familiars, and how she could both disappear and change the shape of her body. Her ugliness was an irrefutable fact; it could not prove her godliness (there is no deference to God in Shipton's history or prophecies), and might prove her maleficence. Although Head likely based some of his story on the legends and folk tales that surrounded Shipton, he was ultimately content to emphasize that her oracular power had to have some kind of supernatual source. Head sits on the fence, and concludes his tract with a tidy little summary:

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[50] *The prophesie of Mother Shipton* (1641). The pamphlet launches immediately into the story of Cardinal Wolsey sending the Duke of Suffolk, Lord Percy, and Lord Darcy to Shipton's home to confront her claim that Wolsey would never reach York with the new King. The Duke ultimately threatened to have her burnt when he reached York. To emphasize his power, and as a bit of precautionary counter-magic, he tossed her kerchief and staff into the fire; neither burned. Shipton claimed that she would not burn either, and went on to predict the future of these three men: the Duke would fall as low as she, Percy would do well, but after his death his head would be stolen and transported to France, and Darcy would go to war, paining men, but killing none (*Prophecie* 2). The Duke's threat, attempt at counter-magic, and Shipton's predictions begin to contextualize her within a malefic framework; however, in the image which accompanies this tract, she still looks like a prophet.

[51] *The Strange and wonderful history of Mother Shipton* (1667/1668?) alleged that Shipton, the illegitimate child of Agnes Shipton and a necromancer or a demon, was born in 1448 to the sound of a thunder clap during a great storm. Her body "was long, but very big boned, great gogling eyes, very sharpe and fiery, a nose of unproportional length, having in it many crookes and turnings, [and] adorned with great pimples, which like vapours of brimestone gave such a luster in the night that her nurse needed no other candle" (5). She began laughing at birth; her laughter stopped the tempest. Her laughter was knowing; according to the pamphlet, she went on to prophesy numerous major English events, including the two great fires in London in 1666 and 1667.

[52] By 1677, Richard Head claimed to have come across ancient manuscripts relating to Shipton's life and death. Having restored them through wine and water baths, he confidently refers to them in claiming that the Devil himself, in the shape of a young, well-dressed man, seduced Shipton's mother, transported her to a castle, married her, and, amid promises of power, made her into a witch, complete with a witch's mark from which he sucked. The consummation of her devilish union drained the health and vitality from Agnes Shipton, who went form "plump and fresh" to a hag, who had "pale shriveled skin on her cheek, which for want of flesh seemed to fall into her mouth" (4). The description of Mother Shipton at birth expands (or was the source for) the previous text; it goes on to emphasize her blackened, shriveled skin, full set of teeth including incisors like tusks, hunched back, and crooked legs and toes (5). Head claims that Shipton's father, the Devil, regularly visited her in the shape of "a cat, dog, bat, or hog," and she herself could change the shape, height, and length of her body at will. Head also recalls that she was an extraordinarily fast learner and began to be recognized early on for her accurate predictions. Head's tract, which was republished at least four times over the next two decades, spends one third of its account tracing the details of her conception, birth, and bodily shape before beginning to look at her prophecies.

> Mother Shipton lived to an extraordinary age, and though she was generally believed to be a witch, yet all persons whatsoever that either read or heard her prophecies, have esteemed them little less than miraculous, and her memory to this day is much honoured by those of her own country. (50)

The witches studied here were Mother Shipton's contemporaries, and her prophecies were dug up and reprinted as sectarian prophets started to swarm the streets of London. The re-appropriation of Shipton's prophecies was a market-driven move: people were in the mood for the prophetic. However, by the late 1670s, the reign of the prophets had ended, and Shipton no longer needed to fit the prophetic mold.[53] That she looked like a witch, and spoke with the authority of a witch, meant that literary and artistic representations of her could shift along with the pamphlet market; her embodied spirituality moved from giving her inspired nobility to demonic decay. Shipton was both prophet and witch, aged and eternal, monstrous and miraculous; she represents the kind of slippage that occurred when prophets looked like witches and claimed irrefutable, sole ownership of their prophecies.

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[53] Oldridge compares Mother Shipton to Friar Bacon, as a character whose legendary status allows her a liminality between spiritual camps. See Part Six of *The Witchcraft Reader* (2002).

Prophecy: Trumpeting or Experiencing?

The study of female prophecy has continued to debate the prophet's confused subject position in relation to the ownership of her prophecy; this has been up for debate over the last decade. By reviewing some of the earlier work done on prophecy, we can see that, the longer we study early modern prophetic women, the closer scholarship comes to acknowledging the ways in which these amazing women maintained a self while trumpeting out God's message, and in doing so, made that message their own. In *Ventriloquized Voices* (1992), Elizabeth D. Harvey proposes that, if early modern male writers appropriated female voices, then female writers could likewise appropriate the male voice, and act as ventriloquists for God. Although Harvey's study firmly locates women within the prophetic act, it does not afford women prophetic agency. Hilary Hinds, in *God's Englishwomen* (1996), uses the term "author-figure" to account for the multivalent voices behind early modern prophecy, and the concentrated efforts of many female prophetic writers to "displace themselves from the position of 'author' of their text" (80-1, 91). Hinds believes that identity was located not in prophetic ownership, but in prophetic performance. The phrase "author-figure" still, however, robs these women of personal ownership of their prophecies, and thus removes them from the act of prophesying. Following Hinds, other critics continued to attempt to negotiate sectarian women's access to prophetic power by emphasizing what the women themselves claimed was their 'in' – a suppression of self which allowed them to speak for God. In 1998, Stevie Davies asked, "what were the conditions that gagged and blinkered so many; and how did the loquacious few circumvent them?"(33). That same year, Phyllis Mack argued that "the ground of women's authority as spiritual leaders was their achievement of complete self-transcendence" (5).

Although there is significant critical hesitation around reading seventeenth-century English female prophets as embodied authors of their own prophecies, transcribed and edited ecstatic prophecy cannot be discounted entirely as the prophet's own creation. In

"The Problematic Normative Assumptions of Heidegger's Ontology," Tina Chanter argues that "we seem to exhibit a persistent, confused avoidance when confronted with bodies. Christian thought offers us plenty of models that envisage the soul, in the absence of salvation, as trapped in, mired by, or condemned by the material aspects of existence"(74). She argues that "feminists must avoid succumbing to the continuing temptation of repeating an inherited aversion to bodily significance" (75). There is a certain critical reluctance to celebrate the physical production of prophecy, the prostrate body, troubled bowels, and melting tears, because investing the female prophet too much in her body, especially when she herself insists she only a vessel for God, might make her seem a mere physical conduit, rather than a cogent and aware author of her own text.[54]

The call to prophesy is more than a momentary impulse, however; it is an event that shifts the prophet's perception of self and the world's perception of her. Although the prophet might claim she is merely the messenger of God's word, in prophesying she becomes more than that. Despite her own assertions, the prophet cannot be separated from her prophecy; the point of the prophetic gesture is the medium that communicates it. Regardless of the form – ecstatic or didactic – and the amount of mediation involved in the transcription and contextualizing of the prophecy, the prophet is still essence of her own message. Her ways of negotiating her vision, audience, and textual mediation are all integral aspects of the prophesy. The spoken performance is just as important as what is spoken.

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[54] Amid the cacophony of mothers, relators, witnesses, editors, compilers, and publishers, all of which may have added, amended, or shaped the texts we read, it may be impossible to locate a coherent truth concerning the ecstatic prophet's production of her prophecy. This does not, however, permit us to dismiss her ownership of that same text. Although issues of editorial influence are crucial to understanding the production and publication of early modern prophecies, the focus of this chapter is the representation of physicality for ecstatic prophets and those within the prophecies themselves.

Bodily Indicators: Torments, Tears, Muteness, Singing, and Starving

The early modern prophet found herself at a crossroads for understanding embodied spiritual performance. Close behind her was the mystical tradition of mortifying and effacing the corporeality of the wet, porous, and lascivious female body, in an attempt to come closer to God. Grace Jantzen argues, in *Power, Gender and Christian Mysticism,* that the female mystic was "encouraged to renounce her sexuality and indeed all the needs of the body to the greatest extent possible," in an attempt to renounce her gender and become less embodied (53). The early modern prophet shared, with medieval and early modern mystics, a tradition of the body as exhibiting physical markers which signified spiritual difference and, in some cases, experiencing divine union as an intensely physical experience.[55] The female body could both suffer as Christ's did, and join spiritually and sexually with him. Although most of the language and spectacle associated with Catholic mysticism disappeared in early modern England's virulently anti-papist environment, for many Puritans, Quakers, Baptists, and Fifth Monarchists, the contemporary experience of prophesying was a profoundly and unapologetically physical phenomenon. Phyllis Mack argues that, far from "posing a clear dichotomy between mind and body, seventeenth-century men and women *felt* certain kinds of knowledge. They described their own spirituality not as an ethereal, disembodied state but as a polymorphous, subterranean energy" (23).

For many prophets, meaning was defined in the experience of the prophetic moment. The single most familiar image of the early modern English ecstatic prophet is that of the prone woman, the emptied vessel, lying down and declaring God's words. This image provides a relatively unproblematic representation how prophecy works: the woman is a trumpet, or a pen; she is a hardened, clean instrument wielded by an outside force; when not engaged, she is lonely and useless. This view, however, is not sufficient. Prophesying is organic, embodied, and transformative. It is more like the fermenting of grapes into wine, or the germination of seed into wheat, than the blowing of air through a trumpet. The prophet foments; prophecy is both a spiritual balm and an excitation. The production of prophecy is, at the least, untidy, uncomfortable, and impolite. Prophesying painfully cripples and rigorously burbles forth; in the prophetic moment, these women weep, wail, starve, and sing. Their prophecies are birthed, not mouthed.[56]

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[55] In *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women* (1987), Caroline Walker Bynum argues that, despite this renunciation of the physical body, no medieval "religious women failed to experience Christ as wounded, bleeding and dying . . . . In fact and in imagery of the *imitatio,* the fusion was achieved in two ways: through asceticism and through eroticism" (131).

The prophet's body, not yet under attack from the outside, is physically and emotionally involved in the production of prophecy. The prophetic moment defines her spiritual subjectivity as much as it marks the prophecy with the prophet's own concerns. Once her body displayed familiar spiritual signs, the woman could begin to be considered as an ecstatic prophet; then, in turn, previous events could be reinterpreted as foreboding symbols of her present spiritual state. Erudite and didactic prophets, along with their ecstatic sisters, likewise spoke what they did not physically experience. They embodied the metaphors they used and used bodily metaphors as corporeal signifiers of spiritual specialness because the body, as much as it was degraded and contaminated, displayed readable manifestations: it offered proof.

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[56] Mary birthed Christ as humanity's redemption and salvation corporealized; thus, Christ can be understood as an embodied spirituality. He is spirit made flesh, and his Passion is the archetype by which prophets model their own martyrdoms.

Entranced

The prophet is closest to God when she seems furthest from the world. Anna Trapnel began her prophetic career with a near-death experience, and prophesied "lying in bed with her eyes shut, and her hands seldom seem to move (*Newes* 193).[57] Eleanor Channel was "dumb, all her senses are taken up," until she found Arise Evans to transcribe her prophecies for her (A5).[58] Sarah Wight was a sometimes deaf, blind, starving, and suffering bedridden daughter, whose hands and feet became "clunched, so as she could not stand" and was still tempted to blaspheme. In a lucid moment, she wept to her brother, "I am sore, from the crown of the head, to the sole of the foot. But let the Lord do what he will with me" (Jessey 31). Jessey calls these painful moments of near-paralysis "trances," and they represent the moments in which Wight is meant to be "commun[ing] with God" (26).[59] According to James Fisher, Martha Hatfield could neither "speak, see, nor hear" (B5). Hatfield could not eat; when food was forced through a broken tooth in her clenched grimace, she would immediately vomit it up.[60] The debilitating symptoms these women suffered, and, moreover, their miraculous recovery from them, established them as having physically manifest symptoms of spiritual specialness. The prophet performs her spirituality in a way that both visually validates her prophetic claims, and firmly establishes the prophecy as essentially physical and experiential.

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[57] Anna Trapnel's divine narrative begins physically:

> Seven years ago I being visited with a feaver, given over by all for dead, the Lord then gave me faith to believe from that Scripture. After two days I will revive thee, the third day I will raise thee up, and thou shalt live in my sight: which two days were two weeks that I should lye in that feaver, and that very time that it took me, that very hour it should leave me, and I should rise and walk, which was accordingly afflicted and tempted ones, inwardly and outwardly. (*Cry* 3)

Like Lazarus rising from his sealed tomb, Trapnel rises from her deathbed and walks. This pattern reoccurs throughout her various ecstasies; after prophesying and fasting for days on end, Trapnel rises from her bed and continues her journey as though she had never been incapacitated. Her sicknesses, followed by vital health, signify and validate Trapnel's religious experience in the same way that inedia and life-in-death signified the legitimacy of female prophetic experience.

[58] Seemingly aware of ecstatic and spiritual competition, Arise Evans notes that Channel's tract is short: "you shall find more truth and substance in it, than in all of Hana Trampenel's songs and sayings" (A5). The spelling of Trapnel's name is a play on the word tramp and knell, proposing that she is merely a singing, or ringing tramp, in comparison to Channel. This is not the only moment that Trapnel was aligned with sexual impropriety. The Matron of her last prison in Bridewell told Trapnel that she had had a "company of Ranting Sluts" in her prison, women who "had spoken a great many good words," as Trapnel had, but who also "had base actions" (*Report and Plea* 38). Although she suspects Trapnel is "one of the crew" of Ranting women who had been imprisoned with her, the text seems to suggest that Trapnel has not acted sexually; it is her words that make her a slut, not what she does with her body (*ibid.*). Maria Margo argues that Ranter is a "byword for sexual promiscuity, gross immorality, bad manners, and, in particular, sexual self-determination for women" (405); Trapnel is one of those bad girls. For more on Margo's reading, see "Spiritual Autobiography and Radical Sectarian Women's Discourse:
Anna Trapnel and the Bad Girls of the English Revolution" (*Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 34:2 (2004), 405-37).

[59] Jessey defines Wight's inert ecstasy, as well as her inedia, as signs of God's "exceeding riches of Grace" (15).

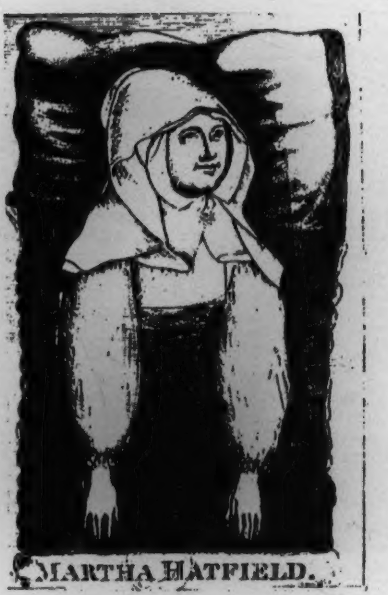
MARTHA HATFIELD.

Figure 7: Figure of Martha Hatfield in bed from The Wise Virgin *(1653)*

Fountain of Life / Fountain of Tears

Numerous women exploited the metaphor of Christ as the fountain of life, connecting his tears with their own; in the Bible's shortest verse, "Jesus wept" (John 1:35). According to Mack, the seventeenth-century belief was that weeping "had sacramental significance as a sign of inward repentant grace" (26).[61] Prophets have a copious cleansing in God's spirit, and will, like a fountain, pour the spirit onto others through their words and tears. Esther Biddle claimed that her own "eyes runneth down as a Fountain for the misery that is overtaking thee" (*Warning* A2). *Exceeding Riches* returns repeatedly to Wight's tears, which "were sometimes trickling down" and "sometimes stopping her speech," as an illustration of her earnestness and her grace (24, 35).[62] By ritualistically washing her eyes to restore sight, Wight aligns tears with water, and water with the "living water" of Christ (John 7:38).[63] Trapnel claimed, in *Strange and Wonderful Newes* (1654), that when the Lord "told [her], that he would out of the mouth of babes and sucklings perfect his praise; then [she] remained silent, waiting with prayer and fasting, with many tears before the Lord for whole Sion"(A2). Her "glorious vision of the New Jerusalem" also "melted [her] into rivers of tears" (A2v). These women become fountains, purifying those who sought them through their tears[64] and through their counsel.

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[60] This moment could easily have come from the Throckmorton witchcraft case when the alleged victims of *maleficium* have their mouths tapped to receive nourishment.

[61] Body fluids have long played an important role in the writings of devotional women, and as an expression of piety. Lidwina of Schiedam, who died in 1433, was said to have "produced extraordinary effluvia . . . she shed skin, bones, and even portions of intestines, which her parents kept in a vase; and these gave off a sweet odor" (Bynum 126). Likewise, Elizabeth of Hungary's (d.1270 or 1271) corpse exuded healing oils. William Flete wrote that blood flowed from Catherine of Siena's mouth during her Eucharistic ecstasies (171). Mack goes on to argue that "feelings were generated by the heart and the motion of bodily fluids (blood, bile, phlegm, tears), not the soul or the brain . . . [Body fluids] contained the body's emotional energy, so that contact with another person's bodily fluids might, in certain circumstances, place one under that person's occult influence"(26).

Prophesying is clearly the prophet's privilege. Her justification, like the justification of all the above women, comes in the form of Joel 2:28: "And it shall come to pass, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh" (Q6v). Mary Cary includes this reference in her text to hammer her home her authority, and to emphasize the similarities between the dissemination of prophecy, and God's dissemination of the ability to prophesy. Spiritual cleansing is "the fountain of all [the saints] spiritual advantages and privileges, [and] will consist in the abundant pouring out of the Spirit upon them" (*Little Horns* Q6v). The prophet used and embodied the fountain metaphor. Margaret Fell wrote, "Here is the fountain . . . Christ Jesus the Everlasting Covenant, who in the last day of the great feast stood and cryed, saying, If any man were athirst, let him come unto me and drink he that believeth on me, out of his belly shall flow Rivers of living waters" (A2v). Fountains are mentioned no less than fifteen times in Katherine Evans and Sarah Cheevers' *A Short Relation*. Biddle uses the same metaphor; speaking as Christ to those "full of running sores, from the crown of thine head, to the sole of thy foot," she asks, "have not I opened a well of pure water to bathe and make thee white?" (*Trumpet* A2v). The erudite and didactic prophet understood the considerable power of the fountain. It was understood on a basic, physical level by those who witnessed and read about embodied spirituality. Those who were not physically suffering often chose, in their writing, to drink of the same fountain as their ecstatic sisters, or found themselves, willingly or unwillingly, doing so in their own lives.

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[62] In "Soul-Ravishing and Sin-Subduing: Anna Trapnel and the Gendered Politics of Free Grace," (2001) Hilary Hinds argues that grace "erases the corrupt body, thereby dissolving the most insistent sign and marker of women's cultural inferiority" (131). Although grace might erase the corrupt body, for Wight, and for Trapnel, their moments of grace put their bodies on display; they become the center of attention with such insistence that they threaten to outperform the prophesying which is supposed to be the reason for the moment. For Hinds on the prophetic body, see *God's Englishwomen* (1996).

[63] Wight began saying: "My soul thirsts for the water of life, and I shall have it: My soul thirsts for the water of life and I shall have it' (four times in ardency of spirit she uttered those words, then adding) a little water good people, a little water. So she drank two or three little cups of water" (16). At this point, Wight cried and chanted, "There is a fountain open, for Judah, and for Jerusalem, for sin, and for uncleanness . . . open, an open fountain" (17). She rhetorically asked, "Who is the fountain? Jesus Christ, he is this fountain: a filling fountain, and never dry" (18). Sinners bathe in Christ and, through this cleansing, are protected and influenced by him; Wight proposes that the same is true of her own tears.

[64] This parallels the biblical tale of the woman who washed Christ's feet with her tears (Luke 11: 36-47).

"Q: Why she now eateth not"

Food, like tears, was an agile spiritual metaphor for sectarian women. Prophets used food metaphors as a way of grounding their prophecies within real human concerns, and illustrating their ability to transcend those same issues. Biblical images of cream, milk, bread, and honey appear as a means of internalizing the scripture and the inner light: purified consumption for purified bodies. For Trapnel and Wight, while experiencing grace, the body is no longer "corrupted by sin" and "desires and appetites are no longer reducible to signs of sinfulness" (Hinds 131). The prophet develops a new positive relationship to human and spiritual food. In *A Loving Salutation to the Seed of Abraham* (1656), Fell invites followers: "every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters freely, without money; buy wine and: hearken diligently, and eat ye that which is good, and let your souls delight it selfe in fatnesse" (3). Trapnel happily alerts merchants that God can give them spiritual preserves that shall not mold, and "are as fresh and lovely as/ They were when first he brought, /

They do not loose their taste at all, / Oh that you would have sought" (*Cry* 30). In *A Short Relation*, Sarah Cheevers tells her "dear Babes and Lambs, feed of the sincere Milk of the Word of Life, that you may grow up in it" (59), and Evans tells her "dear hearts, you do not want teaching, you are in a Land of Blessedness, which floweth with Milk and Honey" (59, 55). Spiritual food was freely available, without cost or consequence to anyone willing to reach out and take it.

In the presence of these cornucopias of spiritual food, withdrawing from human food for extended periods of time was a sign of the prophet's access to the miraculous. During her ecstasy, Wight fasted for seventy-five days, and drank only every forty-eight hours over a period of sixty-five days, yet she managed to muster enough energy to cry out scriptural messages periodically, answer spiritual interrogation, preach, and counsel. Although her audience came to hear her message (her "treasures of grace," delivered daily), they also came to witness the spiritual spectacle embodied by Sarah Wight.[65] Her ecstatic experiences fit into a long prophetic continuum where divine inedia and ascetic starvation are symbols of grace and devotion among female saints and prophets. People came to see the difference which physically marked Wight and made her worthy.[66] This construction,

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[65] Henry Jessey begins *The Exceeding Riches of Grace* by asking his readers to

> Pray for her, if the Lord shall restore her body, which as yet is weak, to eat at all, or to drink but very little, (of faire water, or small Beere, and that onely at once in two, or three, or foure dayes:) and by her daily spending that small strength shee hath, by often uttering forth the treasures of Grace, and by oft speaking to comfort despairing soules: seven or moe whereof have resorted to her. (A3v)

Jessey explains that Wight is spending so much bodily strength in the production of prophecy and pastoral counseling that she no longer has sufficient strength to eat or drink.

[66] Jessey helpfully banners page 116 with "Q. Why she now eateth not," signaling to readers that the explanation for her prolonged fast can be found on this page. This section of the text traces Dr. Cox's May 31 interrogation, and works to authenticate Wight's experience for the logical, doubtful, and, perhaps, male reader. All his questions are numbered (unprecedented in the text) and flagged by the impersonal abbreviations of question and answer (Qu./Quest. and A/An/Ans.), instead of an abbreviation of the speaker's name. The Question/Answer flag happens regularly in only two other dialogues, when Wight is speaking with the Minister or the Relator, both of whom have come to interrogate and challenge her, rather than to seek solace in her counsel. Dr. Cox's query on Wight's inedia illustrates how he resisted a simple, gullible belief in the validity of her ecstatic experience. Among many other questions, he demanded: "Why do you not eat? Why do they not get things for you, that you many rise again?"(116). Wight was probably aware that her own words were being heard and recorded for the spiritual nourishment of others; she answered:

> I doe eate. But its meat to eat, that the world knows not off; but those that tast of it: His

although situating her within the mystical tradition of fasting, does not emphasize bodily closure or negation as a means of achieving spiritual union. Rather, from the outset, Jessey clearly articulates that Wight's physical depletion is the necessary key to prophetic production. "Jesus Christ, in the powring out of his Spirit upon his sonnes and daughters that beleeve," gave Wight the power to prophesy, and he alone has the power, in "stretching out his hand to heale, (soules and bodies:)" to restore her body (A4v).

One of the first questions Wight's followers asked her was "if shee could, to eat, to preserve life," to which Wight answered that Christ "feeds me hidden Manna" (38). Wight soon shifted her stance, and claimed that she did not require any food (manna or otherwise), because all she needed was Christ: "God hath given me food for my soul . . . God hath given me Christ to feed upon: and his flesh is meat indeed; and his blood is drink indeed" (57). In this shift, Wight was attempting to create a kind of symbiosis with Christ, wherein she consumed both his flesh and his scripture, and, in turn, nursed her hungry followers with Christ's words.[67]

If Wight was not familiar with the *modus operandi* of ascetic women, Jessey may have exaggerated her asceticism in an attempt to make her a Baptist saint. Wight

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> words [Jer.15.16] were found, and I did eate them. His words are the joy, and the rejoycing of my heart; his words of mercy, and love, and joy in the Holy Ghost; which fill an empty soul indeed, as I was; which is meat indeed, both to soul and body at the present. (116)

Cox asked Wight twelve questions in total. His critical interest in, and the manifestation of, her inedia are part of a continuum of fascination with female ascetic starvation. For the cost of this inedia, see pages 31, 90-1, 137-39, and 142-143.

[67] Examples of this kind of ambivalent metaphor of nurture are prevalent in the writings of early modern female mystics; if we apply Julia Kristeva's assumption that women attempt to escape reintegration with the mother (the abject) through confessing their sins to the Church and God, then it is possible to read ecstatic female inedia as a replacement of pre-Oedipal bond with the mother with a new pre-Oedipal bond with Christ. Christ would represent for Wight, and her prophetic sisters, the mother who is the Alpha and Omega of self, whose body can self-nourish and pre-verbally anticipate and fulfill need. Bynum believes that women "found it easy to identify with a deity whose flesh, like theirs, was food" (275). Louvain of Lutegard experienced visions where she nursed from the wound on Christ's side. She "saw Christ with his wound all bleeding. And she sucked the sweetness with her mouth at his breast and could feel no tribulation" (Bynum 118). Wight finds "a crucified Christ, a naked Christ," who is simultaneously mother, lover, and child, all the sustenance she needs and desires (22).

positioned her inedia as an unsolicited divine gift.[68] She claimed that she would eat if she could, but "when I have tried, I am worse by it, I can not digest it, and the smell of it hurts me" (132). Wight testified that she does not have "any command or temptation in [her] against [eating]," but simply cannot; she could, however, make sure everyone else understood exactly how she was suffering as a handmaid of God (132).

Wight was not the only prophet who could not eat. Martha Hatfield[69] "could not digest her meat, but vomited up all that she took, which yet was a small quantity for a long time" (C2). She had extraordinary fits of "violent vomitings" and "convulsions" (C2). She hungered for "nothing but Christ," was "very hungry after him," and would "very fain have him" (10). Although Trapnel rarely ate during her ecstatic experiences, she recounts a twelve-day period in which, "for the first five days she neither eat nor drank; and the rest of the time, once in 24 ho: sometimes a very little toast in small beer; sometimes onely chewed it, and took down the moysture; sometimes she drank the small beer, and sometimes onely washed her mouth therewith" (193). Margaret Muschamp trumped them all, however, with a fast purported to last sixteen weeks. Starvation became religious theater; the thinner the body became, the more the audience saw God in it.

There were also women who did not experience inedia, but also did not eat.[70] In missing sustenance, they were performing religious fasts, but also refusing contamination.

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[68] In the medieval tradition, fasting has been seen as a renunciation of the corporeal world in an attempt to grow closer to the spiritual. Some female saints and prophets ate nothing but the Eucharist. Alapis of Cudot "supposedly lived for forty years on the Eucharist alone" (Bynum 134). Catherine of Siena may have come to Wight's attention because of her beatification in 1637, ten years before *The Exceeding Riches of Grace* was published. Catherine was one of the most renowned ascetics; she attempted to deaden her bodily sensations and her desire for food.

[69] Like Jessey, James Fisher lists a series of questions in *The Wise Virgin* (1653); however, here the questions and answers come from Hatfield herself (11-12).

[70] Writing about famed faster Martha Taylor, in *A Discourse upon Prodigious Abstinence* (1669), John Reynolds provides miraculous precedents, but argues for medical explanations of long lasting fasts. One of the most crucial aspects of sustaining long fasts, in his opinion, is the lack of evacuation; without spitting, menstruating, urinating, or defecating, the body needs no food. However, the menstrual blood ferments within the body, causing irrationality. For more information on Reynolds, Maratha Taylor, and early modern fasting, see Karen Hollis' "Fasting Women: Bodily Claims and Narrative Crises in Eighteenth-Century Science" (*Eighteenth-Century Studies* 34:4 (Summer 2001), 523-38). Also see: Joan Jacob Burmbeg's *Fasting Girls: The Emergence of Anorexia Nervosa as a Modern Disease* (1988); Hillel Schwartz' *Never Satisfied: A Cultural History of Diets, Fantasies, and Fat* (1986), 115-19; and Jane Shaw's "Fasting Women: The Significance of Gender and Bodies in Radical Religion and Politics, 1650-1813" (2002) and "Religious Experience and the Formation of the Early Enlightenment Self" (1997).

Mack argues that "southern women labored painfully to sustain a condition of moral purity," emphasizing their place in their own texts, but abnegating the "self" (191). Mack notes that Dewens Morry "told her readers that she had fasted five days in order to prepare herself to compose a visionary tract" (*ibid.*). Barbara Blaugdone abstained from all "flesh, wine, and beer, whatsoever" for the space of a year, during which time the Lord "caused" her to "grow and prosper in the truth" (9). She later fasted "six days and six nights" in a Marlborough prison, feeding only "upon the Lord" (11). Evans and Cheevers both starved and fasted during their imprisonment in Malta. Their emaciation became so severe that, according to Evans, the Friars tried to trick them into eating food in order to keep them from dying. She recalls that Cheevers and herself were so close to death, more than once, "that Sarah did dress her head as she would lye in her Grave (poor Lamb)" (23).

At the end of their fasts, these prophets heard God speak or had a vision.[71] Whereas Mack sees the prophetic recollections of fasting and inedia as the prophet's claim to "a complete disengagement from self," I believe that the emphasis on starving concretely locates the prophet well within her own body and her sense of self. These women are aware of the experience; their fasts are not about a disengagement of self, but a desire to align themselves with medieval and biblical examples of Christian suffering, sacrifice, and devotion, and a longing to expel or avoid contamination, and present to God their cleanest, best, most self-sacrificial selves.

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[71] In Malta, Evans' relationship with food was dictated originally by the feeling of an arrow plunging in her heart as she saw the Consulate's wife pass by with meat she was offering. Accompanying this physical dread was a voice saying, "It is finished, she hath obtained her purpose" (5). Evans "did not taste of her meat, but went aside, and wept bitterly" (*ibid.*). Their sixth day in Malta was the first day of their imprisonment, and it was on this day that their "stomacks were taken away from all meat" (6). On the last day of her fast, Evans "began to be hungry, but was afraid to eat, the enemy was so strong, but the Lord said unto [her], If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink. in so doing thou shalt heap coales of fire upon his head; he not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good" (11). Evans and Cheevers did eat, and were "refreshed, and glorified God"; they had full bellies, but still "in the midst of [their] extremity the Lord sent his holy Angels." The women were comforted (*ibid.*). Curiously enough, the breaking of her fast is marked by Evans' remarkable vision of the woman clothed in the sun. Having suffered like a prophet, representing her travails like Christ's, she traveled through her own personal wilderness, faced temptations, fasted, and had a prophetic vision. Evans and Cheevers later began food restriction again, and ate "but little for three or four Weeks" before they felt "the Lord called [them] to fasting for eleven dayes together" (23).

Self Abuse: "wretchedly bruising and wounding herself"

Interior conflict mollified by self-harm is a standard detail of the redemptive conversion myth. Ecstatic prophets couched these desires in two forms: in the desire to punish the flesh, and in the assertion that the Devil made them do it. The interpretation and results of these acts were problematic: rather than depicting the prophet as a spiritual warrior, self-harm might be read as victimization or demonic victory, in which the prophet's war wounds signified her loss to the enemy. The abused body which became a symbol of godly victory was, still, an abused body. The implications of revering the woman who destroyed her own flesh for God were inherently disturbing and moderately mystical, in a time where Catholicism was a sin and a crime.

Although Joyce Dovey was not a prophet, *A Strange and True Relation* (1646) illustrates the close proximity of sinners and saints in the performance of embodied spirituality, and how much audience participation influenced both. According to James Dalton, by 1642, Dovey, troubled by religious talk, preaching, and prayer, began to have convulsions. During this period, her ecstatic despair was so violent that a "Chaplain of Religion and a Captain," by "some discourse, and other informations, strongly imagined, that she was possessed" (Dalton 2). Her keeper "lift[ed] his heart up to the Lord in prayer," and "without uttering the words," said that, if Dovey were indeed possessed, "the Lord would be pleased to make it manifest" (2). Dalton recounts how Dovey immediately acted like a woman possessed. The devil who occupied her body attempted to destroy it from the inside out, and God, in his infinite mercy, continued to preserve her. Throughout her trials, Dovey was "often thrown against walls and into the fire, but all without any hurt" (*ibid.*). Dalton also recalls how, when she was "cast into a great fire, some would have taken her out but her keeper said, let her alone, and observe the providence of God and straight away she was snatched out without humane help, not having any hurt, or so much as the smell of fire on her clothes" (*ibid.*). Most brutally, Dovey appears to have tried to kill herself: she "snatched a paire of Cizzers from a womans girdle, and applied them to her throat, and another time a knife from another, in an admirable quick way, and strook her breast, yet both without so much as a scarre in either place" (*ibid.*). Had the Chaplain and Captain who visited her read her torments as those of prophecy, rather than possession, her embodied spirituality ultimately could have been read and performed differently: she would have been blessed, not cursed.

Wight's experiences, published a year after Dovey's, seem to be their mirror image; Jessey, however, leaves no doubt that Wight's physical torments were signs of her position as prophet, not as victim of possession. Wight saw herself as the worst of all sinners; she had, at least in her mind, seen the blackest part of her own soul, and realized that she was damned. Wight understood her spiritual experiences, her pilgrimage to the abyss and back, as proof of her authority. In her short life, she battled more demons than those around her; this was the locus of her power. Jessey's construction of her prophetic identity stretched back through a series of portentous events, in which Wight's dramatic suicide attempts and persistent self-mortification were witnessed and thwarted by the "Lord [who] prevented her ruine" (127). These "storms and tempests" reached their peak a month before Wight fell into her prophetic trances (10). Although self-destructive tendencies appear in the histories of many saints and prophets, Jessey seems to revel in the details of Wight's self-mortification. Details of Wight's self-abuse, "by drowning, strangling, stabbing, seeking to beat out her brains, wretchedly bruising and wounding herself," leap off the page in at fever pitch, to form a sharp contrast with the stillness of her prophesying (8).[72]

Well after rising from her sickbed, Wight sat one day and again "told Christian friend how God had prevented her ruin" (127). She stole her mother's key and skulked out of the house; she saw "a fire and Satan as a roaring Lyon in it" (128). Still believing that

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[72] Attempting to awe or terrify Mistress Palmer with the depths of her despair, Wight herself admitted that she "sought to beat out her braines, against the wall, many times; and thereby was bloody and swelled. And sought to cast herself down from steep places; and got knives and other things to kill herself with" (59). Not only did she get the pleasure of indulging in these stories of self-harm, they all add up to God preventing her ruin because she was so special.

Hell was only in her conscience, Wight attempted to throw herself off a cliff; she heard a voice assert, "Thou shall not fall down, and burst asunder, as Judas did, and so dishonor God that made thee" (128). Unable to plummet to her death, Wight went back in the house, and tried to bash her head in on the chimney. She later took a knife and, sitting in a ditch, contemplated throwing herself into the Thames. At this point, Wight approached two men whom she thought were Ministers, and confessed her suicidal thoughts: "I am not well, I am as sad a Creature as any on earth. I see my condemnation, and nothing els. I cannot be well, till I have taken my life" (129). Instead of acknowledging her cry for spiritual help, the two men asked her, "Wither were you going?"(129). Seen but not really heard, Wight neither shocked, nor elicited the concern of these two men. Her current tactics proving ineffective, Wight contemplated "offer[ing] her self to the Dogs, to eate her up, that her Mother might never heare of her more" (130). Wight is not being attacked, but is trying to destroy her own body; the miracle lay in her inability to harm herself. Although one might read Wight's experience as that of the despairing reprobate,[73] self-abuse and physical assault were symptomatic of the religious despair of her time, and of prophetic self-fashioning.

Carola Scott-Luckens reads Wight's claim that the Devil was fighting with her, as "he did with Michael and his Angels" (Jessey 12), as a performance of *ars moriendi* (literally, "the art of dying"), in which the body of a believer drawing near to death becomes a kind of spiritual battlefield between God and Satan, a metaphysical divide which encompasses the onlookers as well as the dying sufferer (Scott-Luckens 219). Scott-Luckens' reading emphasizes two major points about Wight and the performance of embodied spirituality by early modern women: that the battle for the prophet's soul is enacted physically; and her subjectivity is, in turn, decided by public interpretation of that performance.

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[73] John Stachniewski, whose text *The Persecutory Imagination* (1991) addresses both Wight and Trapnel, argues that "the numberless published treatises or sermons on predestination or signs of election virtually without exception speak about despair generally in order to distinguish the despair of the reprobate from its potentially misleading simulacrum in the pre-conversion experience of the elect" (27). In his selection of these portentous events, Jessey seeks to authorize the validity of Wight's experience as not only one of the elect, but as having passed through fire to earn the right to serve as a prophet. Wight's main problem was her belief in the Lutheran concept of Hell. Stachniewski writes that, for Luther, Hell "was essentially psychological. It was the pain of eternal rejection by God. And since rejection could be communicated to the reprobate in this world, Hell was the literal experience of the despairing reprobate" (23-4).

Hatfield's embodied spirituality left little room for interpretation. She was busily warring with Satan; therefore, she was one of the good guys. Hatfield vacillated quickly between enraptured joy and embattled determination. She opened her arms up, and "struck so violently as if she had more than ordinary strength, and expressed herself in these words 'Away, away, away Satan with a stern countenance … and so she continued for some time" (7). Hatfield battled Satan more than once; her fisticuffs were always dramatic, but prone. She flailed her arms in her bed, and, although her strength was noteworthy, her body continued to be bedridden.

Trapnel had an adolescence like Hatfield and Wight's. Her physical torments were largely otherworldly, invisible to onlookers, or attempts at self-injury. In *Cry of a Stone* (1653), she recounts:

> being forced by Sathan to walk up and down the fields, attempting to throw my self into a Well ... I was forced to lye in ditches frequently, till it was dark night, that some found me, and led me home; And again frequently I took Knives to bed with me, to destroy my self, and still they were snached out of my hand, I know not how, not by any Creature: I durst not eat nor drink for four days together, because it was said to me, If thou doest, thou worshippest the Devil; For in every thing give thanks, whether thou eatest or drinkest, do it all to the glory of God: but thou canst do nothing to the glory of God, therefore thou gratifiest Sathan; And do not add sin to sin by so doing. (8)

Trapnel believed that Satan compelled her to enact a performative self-destruction; an audience, corporeal or spiritual, viewed and validated her actions. Trapnel self-consciously performed despair; when necessary, she waited to invite recognition. Although she wandered aimlessly in the fields, intervention always arrived before she succumbed to madness. Though she was deranged enough to lay in ditches until late at night, once found, Trapnel passively allowed herself to be led home by concerned members of her community.

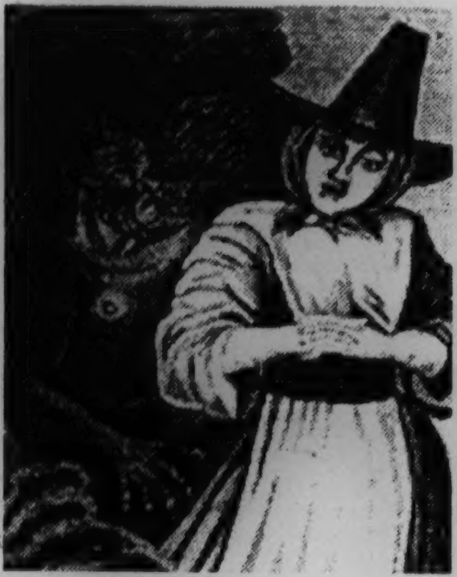

Figure 8: Anna Trapnel (later image)

There are moments when the ecstatic prophet and the demoniac perform their embodied spirituality in identical ways: the Devil torments them, they mortify their own flesh, and their bodies are attacked. They are made to do things no sensible woman would do, and yet, they are relatively unharmed. The difference between prophecy and possession lies in what happens next. If her torments are read as portents of a spiritually significant future, she can move forward; if she is perceived to be a victim rather than a visionary, she stays inside her own religious despair. Oddly enough, in both cases, their physical experiences are read as signs of God's grace. In Wight, Hatfield, and Trapnel, we can see the Devil defeated in battle; in Dovey, still alive and kicking, the audience is left without a score at the end of the first round. However, it is clear in all four cases that these women are swept up in a spiritual battle which not only defines despair, but uses their bodies as collateral.

Assault: "Whipt me till the Blood ran down my back"

Besides the ecstatic reprobates, prophets, and demoniacs, whose war wounds were self-inflicted or came from insubstantial foes, numerous women were actually brutally physically assaulted for their religious beliefs. These hate-crimes became ways for the women who survived them to authorize their prophetic positions, by locating themselves within a continuum of religious martyrs. Their performance under assault was narratively crucial; despite their agony while under attack, their spirits had discernibly to soar. Although Mary Fisher never published her own tract during her lifetime, her stories are told in manuscripts she intended for dissemination through the Quaker network.[74] Along with fellow Quaker Elizabeth Williams, Fisher was stripped to the waist and whipped at Cambridge, and, as previously mentioned, strip-searched for witch's marks. Mack notes that Fisher signed Thomas Aldam's tract along with Jane Holmes, "who had been ducked as a scold for preaching in the streets of Malton" (168). Moved to go to the city of Carlisle and speak against all deceit and ungodly practices, Dorothy Waugh was, without cause or charge, "pulled off the cross" (*Lambs* 29). The mayor came and asked Waugh where she came from, to which she answered, "out of Egypt, where thou lodgest" (30). This response so enraged the mayor that he had Waugh bridled and displayed to the town, imprisoned, bridled and displayed again, and finally whipped from town to town by one constable after another, until she reached her own home.[75] The mayor did all this to prevent more Quakers from coming to speak in his town. Quaker women continued to receive the worst kind of physical abuse: Margery Caustock was "punched in the stomack" and Anne Colman "almost died when the knots of a whip split open one of her nipples" (248).

Barbara Blaugdone records, with brevity and nonchalance, three blood-chilling moments of violence against her. Her suffering contextualized her within a history of biblical prophets and martyrs, while her narrow escapes from death illustrated how God continued to protect the body which prophesies. Blaugdone's whipping highlighted a moment that incorporated her verbal and physical powers as a prophet; the power of one validated the other. Blaugdone recounts how the "Sheriff came with a Beadle, and had [her] in a Room, and Whipt [her] till the Blood ran down [her] back, and [she] never started at a Blow" (13).[76] Stevie Davies reads this whipping as "an act of quivering power-lust; a lust Barbara was proud to disappoint" (253). Blaugdone physicalized her resistance, which "sang off her tongue" while "a sense of glory filled her as she turned her back on the whip" (254). She was suffering for God's sake; her ability to transcend corporeal pain was a sign to those who witnessed this vicious spectacle. The brutality she encountered is even more complicated when viewed through the witch's glass. Whipped until blood runs, stabbed with scissors, and almost cleaved through the head,[77] Blaugdone experiences physical violence that is intent on drawing her blood and penetrating her skin. She claims:

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[74] Her story was recorded, however, a hundred years later by Joseph Besse, in *A Collection of the Sufferings of the People Called Quakers* (1753).

[75] Waugh described the bridle as a "stone weight of iron by the relation of their own Generation & three bars of iron to cover over my face, and a piece of it put in my mouth . . . which was locked to my head" (*Lambs* 30). Waugh relates, "so I stood at their time with my hands bound behind me with the stone weight of iron upon my head and a bit in my mouth to keep me from speaking" (*ibid.*) See *The Lambs Defense against Lies* (1656), pp. 29-30.

> I was in Jeopardy of my Life several times, but the Lord prevented it. I was made to speak in a Market-place, and there was a Butcher sworn he would cleave my Head in twain; and had his Cleaver up ready to do it, but there came a Woman behind him and caught back his Arms, and staid them till the Souldiers came and rescued me. (27)

The disruptive power of her preaching can only be controlled or stopped by attacking her body—she is bled to break her spell. Her repeated insistence that she would have happily died in these painful moments reveals Blaugdone's feelings about her embodied spirituality; she is closest to God when she physically suffers the most for him. She does not transcend pain and humiliation; it is in her complete experience of them that she becomes most worthy. Blaugdone writes about her experiences in the same way people speak about their guardian angel as a protective force; she is protected from above, and that protection authorizes the preaching which occasioned it.

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[76] Blaugdone goes on to prove how little she was affected by the flagellation, making herself into a martyr by emphasizing her spiritual and physical resistance. She recounts: "the Lord made me to rejoice, that I was counted Worthy to Suffer for his names sake, and I sung aloud; and the beadle said, Do ye Sing; I shall make ye cry by and by; and with that he laid more Stripes, and laid them on very hard" (13-5).

[77] She claims that Mary Prince and herself:

> were coming Arm in Arm from a Meeting, that was at George Bishop's house, there was a Rude Man came and abused us, and struck off Mary Prince her Hat, and run some sharper knife or instrument through all my Clothes, into the side of my Belly, which if it had gone but a little farther, it might have killed me; but my Soul was so in love with the Truth, that I could have given up my life for it at that day. (10)

The physical and spiritual assaults these women suffered helped establish their prophetic positions, and the intense and often unwelcome physicality of embodied spirituality. Their physical pain, which vested them firmly in human suffering, also enabled them to transcend the normal parameters of human experience. Their experiences became symbolic of greater spiritual battles. These women were not reduced to naked and flayed backs; the physical assaults they suffered did not solely define them, but they did contribute to a teleology in which the assaults these women suffered made them into martyrs, and proved that they were prophets all along.

Mothers and Monsters

The prophet put her body, as well as her opinions and beliefs, on display. While this public position invited a supportive following to gather around her spiritual energy, it also made her fodder for critics, determined to find proof of sectarian error in the bodies of its proponents. William E. Burns argues that "polemicists were not restricted to monsters alleged to actually exist; they could also employ monsters or monstrosity as metaphors" (191).[78] The prophet's opened mouth became sexualized; speaking made her a whore who produced illegitimate and often monstrous children. Martha Simmonds, who aspired to leadership in the Quaker movement, was vilified, and memorialized as James Nayler's corrupting Jezebel. However, the speaking woman was more than a lascivious body; she was seen as the often (il)legitimate mother of her texts. The production of inspired speech similar enough to the production of children that the prophet's words often became inseparable from her body. In turn, the trope of motherhood was used extensively in sectarian writing in early modern England.[79] Christ was seen as a mother who nursed his children. Margaret Fell was seen as a spiritual mother as well as the mother of Quakerism. As witchcraft traveled in families, so did prophecy: Sarah Wight's mother was one of Jessey's earlier protégées,[80] and Trapnel's mother purportedly asked, "Lord! Double thy spirit upon my child; These words she uttered with much eagerness three times, and spoke no more" (*Cry*, A2).[81] The mother was believed to transfer her own beliefs, experiences, and sins onto the body of her unborn child *in utero*.[82]

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[78] William E. Burns goes on to describe "a royalist pamphleteer described as a monster whose face was all ear." A more elaborate royalist pamphlet, *Mistris Parliament brought to bed of a monstrous childe of reformation* (1648), uses a headless monster born to Parliament, personified as a woman, to stigmatize it an all its monstrous works. Parliamentarians were also ready to attack their opponents as metaphorical monsters. The author of *The character of an Oxfordincendiary* (1645), for example, likened the royalists to salamanders, hermaphrodites, "earth-born giants," and multiple-headed hydras. (191) For more information on Burn's take on the polemical use of monstrosity, see "The King's Two Monstrous Bodies: John Bulwer and the English Revolution" (187-202).

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[79] In "Women's Public Political Voice in England: 1640-1740" (1998), Lois Schwoerer argues that the "imagery of childbirth, passages that analogize London's suffering to a women in childbirth (such as in Biddle's tract) or a soul calling out to be delivered of sin to a 'woman in travail crying to be delivered' (as in Judith Eedes's essay) seem to me to signal a woman's voice" (70-1). Phyllis Mack cites a number of occurrences of maternal imagery: "'O the milk that runs through Christ's breasts!' wrote Anna Trapnel: 'Come sucklings take it in.'" Eleanor Davies also portrayed God and the church as female (though hardly feminine): "the church of God being then with child, travailing in birth, crying and pained to be delivered of the man child, roaring like a lion, the whole forest ringing" (114). Sarah Jones, Mack argues, "was positively lyrical when she described the righteous congregation, "out of whose bellies flow rivers of waters of life . . . holy brethren such are made partakers of the divine nature," but the birth of her own text is described is described thus: "I presume to *father* this naked child without scholastic phrases, or school learning to dress it and garnish it" (114).

[80] Wight's youth was troubled by her mother's long periods of depression, which may have created a blueprint for her own metaphysical crisis. In response to her "mother's deep afflictions of Spirit, and sore Temptations," Wight was "well trained up in the scriptures" by her grandmother (6). In *Unbridled Spirits,* Davies suggests that Wight's ecstasy may have been a grab at her mother's "spiritual limelight" (126). During the period before her ecstasy, Wight did seem to react against her mother, suggesting that her attempted suicides were the manifestation of a familial power struggle; however, the twelve-year-old Wight probably had little else to rebel against. Although Wight's descent into religious ecstasy can be read as an attempt finally to separate and protect her identity from an overpowering mother, even deep in religious ponderings, Wight remains acutely aware of her mother's presence, and seeks to control how she witnesses her daughter. When Mary Wight, "wearied out with continuall watching," tried to leave her daughter, Sarah was "taken with . . . exceeding trembling" (14). Conversely, Mary Wight's suffocating and coddling affection may have been a means to recapture, vicariously, some former glory; we might imagine her devotedly hovering in the wings, or under the marquis that once featured her name.

Sectarian women on both sides of the pond were believed to tranform mosterous thoughts into monsterous offspring. In 1637, Mary Dyer gave birth to a monster in Boston.[83] The child's deformities were described in grotesquely vivid detail.[84] The encyclopedic list of physical deformities is followed quickly by an equally long list of her mother and father's moral and spiritual deformities. The top reason cited for the birth of this monstrous child was that "the Father and Mother were of the highest form of our refined Familists, and very active in maintaining their party, and in reproaching some of the Elders, and others, who did oppose those Errors" (46).[85] Likewise, Anne Hutchinson was supposed to have given birth to thirty misshapen children in New England.[86] This event was read as a sign of God's displeasure at her religious leanings:

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[81] Diane Purkiss argues that "this story in explaining Trapnel's gifts as the product of her mother's prayer associates Trapnel's mother with the power of words. Whereas Trapnel characteristically pleads with God from the third person her mother is able to speak as an authoritative subject; her words, repeated three times, are not a prayer but an incantation, words of power. Trapnel's mother's dying speech represents the full subversive power of the woman prophet, for it inverts the most basic of all hierarchal relations, the relationship between God and the believer. In imagining her mother's words as an efficacious act, Trapnel associates the power of words not with God but with woman in a manner she is not able to replicate in her self-representation" (143).

[82] The idea of monstrosity was used politically as well as spiritually. In *A New Years Gift* (1645), Katherine Chidley warns Mr. Simpson that any new government can be born deformed and "to judge and determin so of a thing, which is not yet begotten, or brought forth in this Kingdome, is not so easie a matter, neither do we know what forme or shape it will have when it is brought forth. [It may (for ought I know) be a Monster like the Image of the sevenheaded beast]" (21).

[83] The moral of most monstrous births is simply that God is angry at the sin in the world. Stuart Clark, in *Thinking with Demons* (1997), argues they were a "form of announcement which, when correctly read, told of the special sins that had occasioned them or the particular nature of God's chastisement, or the nearness of the Last Judgment" (366). For more information on Clark's view of the demonizing of the monstrous birth, see *Thinking with Demons* (1997), pp. 366-69. Mary E. Fissel (2004) notes that John Sadler refocuses the responsibility for monstrous births from God's will into the corrupt womb. In *The sick womans private looking-glass* (1636), Sadler argues that women are at fault in the production of monsters, in three ways:

> First, in the formative facultive, which may be too strong, or too weake, by which is produced a depraved figure. Secondly, in the instrument or place of conception, the evill conformation or disposition whereof, will cause a monstruous birth in the imaginative power at the time of conception, which is of such force that it stamps the character of the thing imagined upon the child: so that the children of an adultresse may be like unto her owne husband though begotten by another man; which is caused through the force of the imagination which the woman hath of her owne husband in the act of coition. (137-138)

Numerous texts have been written on monstrosity: "Monstrous Births and the Body Politic" ((2002), pp. 209-30) looks at how the monstrous birth trope applied to women' political writing. Also see Katherine Parks and Lorraine Daston's "Unnatural Conceptions: The Study of Monsters in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century France and England," *Past and Present* 92 (1981), 20-54.

[84] According to the tract, the infants'

> eyes stood far out, so did the Mouth; the Nose was hooking upward, the Breast and Back was full of sharp prickles, like a Thornback; the Navel and all the Belly with the distinction of the Sex, were, where the lower part of the Back and Hips should have been, and those back-parts were on the side the Face stood. The Arms and Hands, with the Thighs and Legs, were as other Childrens, but instead of Toes, it had upon each Foot Three Claws, with Talons like a young Fowl. Upon the Back, above the Belly, it had two great Holes, like Mouths, and in each of them stuck out a piece of Flesh. It had no Forehead, but in the place thereof, above the Eyes, Four Horns, whereof two were above an Inch long, hard and sharp, the other two were somewhat shorter. (Winthrop 46)

> And see how the wisdom of God fitted this judgment to her sin every way, for look as she had vented mishapen opinions, so she must bring forth deformed Monsters; and as about thirty opinions in number, so many monsters; and as those were publick, and not in a corner mentioned, so this is now come to be known and famous over all these Churches, and a great part of the World. (Winthrop B3v-B4)

In 1642, back in England, a monster was born in Kirkeham to a Catholic woman, Mistress Haugton, who declared, amid typical anti-roundhead sectarian and Puritan rhetoric, that "I pray God, that rather that I shall be a Roundhead, or bare a Roundhead,

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[85] The midwife was "notorious for familiarity with the Devil, and now a prime familist"; the child's death *in utero* caused the bed to shake, and all the women present were taken to "such a violent Vomiting, and Purging" that they were forced home, where they mysteriously contaminated their own children with the same sickness (46). The eighth and final reason cited is that the father, William Dyer, "was upon the Lord's day (by an unexpected occasion) called before the Church for some of his Monstrous Opinions; As that Christ and the Church together are the New Creature; There is no Inherent Righteousness in Christians; *Adam* was not made after God's Image, *&c.* which he openly maintained, yet with such shuffling, and equivocating, as he came under Admonition, *&c.*" (Winthrop 47).

[86] The details of the birth contain vehement hatred, and details worth recording:

> Mistriss Hutchison being big with Child, and growing towards the time of her labour, as other women do, she brought forth not one, (as Mistris Dier did) but (which was more strange to amazement) thirty monstrous births or thereabouts, at once; some of them bigger, some lesser, some of one shape, some of another; few of any perfect shape, none at all of them (as far as I could ever learn) of humane shape. These things are so strange, that I am almost loth to be the reporter of them, lest I should seem to feign a new story, and not to relate an old one, but I have learned otherwise (blessed be his name) than to delude the world with untruths. (Winthrop B3v)

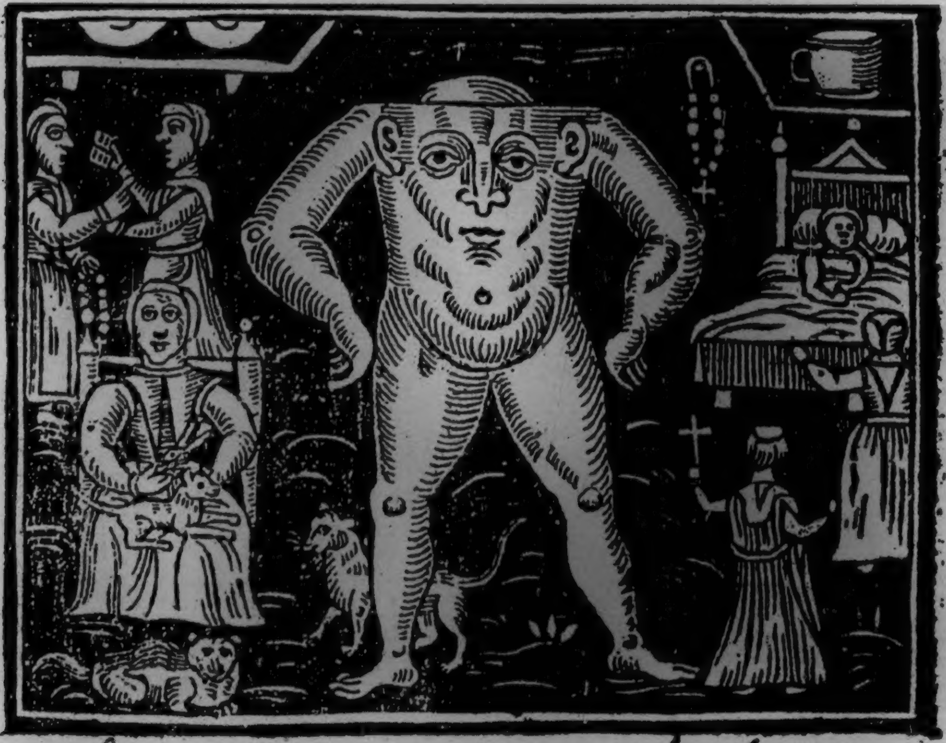

Figure 9: Mistress Haughton and her monstrous child. From A declaration of a strange and wonderfull monster. *(1646)*

I may bring forth a Child without a head" (*Declaration* 6).[87] The comment, in retrospect, was prophetic: her child was born "ugly and deformed," a child "without a head . . . only the child had a face upon its breast" (5). In 1652, Ranter Mary Adams, named herself the Virgin Mary and declared she had conceived Christ by divine conception. She gave birth and was imprisoned for blasphemy.[88] Labour was eight days long; on the morning of the ninth day, she "was delivered of most ugliest, ill-shapen Monster that eyes every beheld; which being born dead they buried with speed for it was so loathsome to behold" (4).[89] Thomas Edwards includes a letter in *Gangræna* "from a learned and godly Minister in Colchester," which records the story of Goodwife Cosens' stillborn infants.[90] Their birth defects are attributed to the fact the "Father of this Monster is a Separatist, frequenting their congregations an enemy to the baptising of his own children; the Mother a hearer in the separated congregations likewise, who resolved heretofore, that if ever she had any more children, they should never be baptized" (Edwards 4).[91]

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[87] The births of monstrous children were well-established portents of God's displeasure with England. Anthony Munday's *A View of Sundry Examples* (1584) notes two English births amid continental examples: a "twin was born in Manchester without a head; his brother was born normal, whereas in At. Aberwhick, also in Northumberland, a child was born having two heads in perfect proportion and the ears like a horse" (C3v). *The Strange Monster* (1668) records a series of monstrous births, which are represented as signs of God's displeasure at England's wicked ways. The author records one or two monstrous births during the reigns of several monarchs. The first birth is of a child with a pointed head, no nose, fish eyes, webbed fingers, long ears, and hair growing down its back (3). For Elizabeth's reign, he notes a child born with a "breast and belly monstrously big [and] about the neck a great collar of flesh and skin growing like the ruffle of a shirt" (5). In 1582, the monstrous becomes miraculous, when a child goes into a trance lasting ten days, and awakes uttering "strange speeches, inveighing against pride covetousness, coldness of charity and other enormous crimes" (5). In 1613, a "maiden child was born having, four arms, four legs, two bellies joined to one back, one head with two faces, one before, one behind, like the picture of Janus" (6). The 1680 tract, *A True Relation of a monstrous female child*, the story of conjoined twins joined at the back, is very careful to not attribute the children's physical anomalies to the parents' spiritual or moral wellbeing. The father, the tract notes, was a "poor, honest, laborious man . . . of honest repute, free from all aspirations of vice or exorbitances," circumstances which others might have pointed to as causing the birth defect (3). The mother's story does not, however, appear.

The birth of deformed children, or conjoined or parasitic twins, was a malleable portent; it represented God's displeasure, his infinite mercy, the arrival of End of Days, personal failure, or familial corruption. The woman's body was more than a road-map of her embodied spirituality; it became an oven, which could produce whole or tainted bread.

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[88] *The Ranters Monster* (1652) uses the same image as *A declaration of a strange and wonderfull monster* (1646), published six years before.

[89] The stillborn infant had "neither hands nor feet, but claws like a toad in everyplace where hands should have been, and every part was odious to behold" (4). After the birth, Adams "rotted and consumed where she lay, being from the head to the foot as full of blotches, blains, boils, & stinking scabs" (*ibid.*). Shortly after, Adams disemboweled herself (*ibid.*).

[90] The children were twins. One was "a perfect child the other was born without a head, having upon the breast some characters of a face, nose, and eyes, wanting one arme and the other arme being rather the stump of an arme, ended in a crotch of two fingers, with something like a thumb coming out of one side of it: Downward one of the feet was perfect, the other foot wanted a heel, and had only two toes which grew forward, and another toe growing out of one side of it" (Edwards 4).

[91] Fathers could also transfer their impure and seditious thoughts to their unborn children. According to the anonymous author of *A Strange Monster* (1668),

> a child was born whose father, in these late times of libertism, when the different opinions of Religion made many to be of no religion, be at that time (seeing such confusion of sects amoung those who call themselves Christians) turned Jew, refusing according to Levitical Law, to taste of any Swines flesh, it pleased God not long after he had a child born with hair and bristles like to a hog which wrought so upon him that he soon altered religion, turned Christian, and (as I hear) is now a great adherer to the Romanish persuasion (6)

The prophet's physical and textual children merged easily, and defects in either were read as an irrefutable sign of the mother's own defectiveness.

Sharing the Womb

Early modern witches and prophets came to understand the physical as a defining element of their spiritual identity. The body of the witch, believed to manifest the malefic pact, was often the focus of physical and legal attacks. Although many of the women who walked through the streets of London prophesying sought to emphasize the power of their words, the state of their bodies provided tabloid-like titillation for readers. Regardless of what the witch or prophet said, her body provided onlookers with a solid place to focus their fascination.

The creation of malefic and prophetic identity was a multivalent process. Although witches and prophets were not so much discovered as created, something about the woman in question had to be recognizable; how she was interpreted helped to define whether the spiritual influence she displayed was demonic or divine. Despite their differing spiritual alignments, the performances of Joyce Dovey, Martha Hatfield, and Sarah Wight's embodied spirituality could be transposed. Their actions and the status of the physical signifiers on their bodies made them into strange quadruplets; their spiritual designations were arbitrarily assigned through third-party perceptions. Witches and prophets were both visited by the Devil and physically changed by their embodied spirituality; they produced children who were likewise stained by their mothers' spiritual allegiances.

The stories that come to us, however, are produced with a bias, blatantly illustrating the final and, admittedly, most extreme way in which others sentenced a woman. The public construction usually began, and was insidiously reproduced, much closer to home. For witches, a woman's age was the easiest physical marker to identify. The 'old witch' was almost synonymous with the 'wise virgin'; age was a kind of physical corruption that easily decayed into spiritual corruption, and youth, a blank slate which could bring a girl closer to God. Words hissed by an old woman could take on an ominous tone, while a virgin's visions could be treated with undue weight. Whether diagnosed as witch or prophet, the woman had her body searched, or watched for the signifiers which would confirm suspicion. The floating body was searched, the hardened body scratched, dripping scratches led to a search for bleeding teats, and all in turn forced questions about sexual deviance. Faced with legally binding evidence, the witch aligned her story with that being told about her, through the marks found on her body. The prophet's situation was similar. Once her visions garnered the rapt attention of her peers, her body embodied the spirituality which needed to be displayed by muteness, paralysis, inedia, and starvation. Her suffering, at her own hands or at those of others, martyred her and constructed her as a prophet.

The witch and prophet's bodies did more than hint at their spiritual state; they screamed it. Although audience perception and participation clearly influenced, if not actually defined, how women performed and interpreted their own embodied spirituality, the way women dealt with the physical phenomena they experienced cannot be discounted. The marks on the witch's body, and the pain and humiliation of the swimming, searching, and scratching, may have convinced her she was under attack, thus making her more willing to confess. The physicality of prophetic production meant that women felt what they prophesied, understanding the words on a profoundly intimate level, and ensuring that their prophecy belonged to them. The prophet felt her prophecy, hungered for it, thirsted for it, ached for it. Her body was not a clean, mechanical trumpet; it was the laboring body of a birthing mother. The witch and prophet's bodies extended to their textual and biological children: witchcraft moved along family lines, as did ecstatic spirituality. Witches and prophets both produced offspring: Wight's mother passed on spiritual intensity, as Mother Waterhouse's grandmother passed on malefic magic. The witch's familiar also had its twin in Hutchinson's deformed progeny. As much as the woman herself was defined by her embodied spirituality, her identity was too large to be contained within a single human frame.

Familiar Angels and Diminutive Demons: Extensions of Identity

> *When hee gave it unto her, willed her to open her mouth, and hee would blow into her a Faerie which should doe her good—* The Wonderful Discoverie of the Witchcrafts of Margaret and Phillip Flower (1619)

The witch and prophet did not come by their extraordinary and preternatural powers naturally. Although both women were spiritually significant players, the linguistic and physical elements which contributed to the witch and prophet's identities say very little about the root of their transcendental powers. Witchcraft tracts only scantily illuminate the female use of traditional magic. Similarly, prophecies have no inherent magical power. The bodies of the witch and prophet manifested the byproducts of the spiritual energies which surged through them, but were not in themselves thaumaturgic. Their powers were so great that their peers, and perhaps the women themselves, could not comprehend them as having a corporeal containment.

While this study has so far looked at witch and prophet through language and body, this chapter will look beyond the limits of these women's frames, both physical and metaphysical, to the spiritual second selves which made them into spiritual warriors. In her dissertation, "Bubbies of the Enlightenment: Discourses of the Body in the Late Eighteenth Century," Susan Liepert[1] notes that "accurate and detailed observations of neural activity have revealed that many phenomena traditionally believed to be purely mental can and do operate at a 'bodily' (e.g., neural) level; even cognition itself can no longer be considered a process confined to the self-perceiving 'mind' (Churchland 48)" (18). Liepert goes on to argue that, in a "very literal sense, then, a substantial portion of the 'mind' is the body, and a growing consensus among neurophysiologists maintains that the study of 'mind' needs to expand beyond even bodily limits, to incorporate social and environmental factors as well (Zeman 30-34, Jarvilehto 36)" (18). The nature of the witch's and prophet's power demands a similar sensitivity to the possibilities of a body beyond the traditional bounds of the physical body. Malefic and prophetic identities, and the demonic and oracular power associated with them, were often too messy to be contained within a mortal frame. Contemporaries, critics, and often the women themselves, had to find ways to explain how common women worked the monstrous and miraculous, such an explanation was provided by a spiritual second self. The witch and prophet were called into being through public acknowledgment of their relationships with these familiars, imps, spirits, fairies, angels, demons, God, the Devil, and even the prophetic self.

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[1] Many thanks to Susan Liepert for generously allowing me to dip into the rich well of her dissertation to explain the important correlation between body, mind, and spiritual second self.

These conscious and unconscious spiritual entities were, however, pesky and problematic. Unlike the words heard, or the bodies searched, these second selves, inextricably tied to the women's own identities, seem to readers the stuff of visions and nightmares. Familiars are vicious, temperamental parasites, fairies are impossibly folksy, and assertions that God or the Devil has an ongoing personal interest in one woman's angst are strangely arrogant. Discussing familiars and fairies is, at times, as difficult as catching them. Meaning continually slips, within cases and as time passes.

The spiritual second self can be used in two main ways: as an important element in a close reading of early modern texts, and as a way of understanding how these women saw their own identities. In understanding the second self, we can understand how malefic magic worked, how women came to possess the information they did, and how prophesying was produced. Moreover, we come to understand how women themselves related to their power, desires, and identities. Joan Waterhouse saw her familiar as a family totem, Elizabeth Stile spoke of hers as mercenaries, and, in a handy chart at the back of his text, the author of *A true and just recorde, of the information* (1582) textually linked each witch with her familiar. Joan Willimot, Anne Jefferies, and Margaret Muschamp muddled and merged familiar, faerie, and angel. Reprobate sinners Hannah Allen and Joan Drake defined themselves by their ecstatically sinful thoughts, and their shadow selves appeared (as did those of Temperance Lloyd) in the shape of the blackman. Similarly, ecstatic prophets understood their prophetic selves as enlightened: their best, brightest, most worthy selves, moving through their prophecies and communing with the inner light. Women had to have some way of articulating where their power came from, and examiners, judges, and writers needed that power to be somehow outside the woman herself; the spiritual second self provided such a way.

The spiritual second self could neither be proved, nor disproved. Possibly the most useful aspect of the second self, with its problematic meanings, was the potential explanation it offered for the apparent blending of the physical and spiritual in the power of the witch and prophet. As desperate as early modern England was to see manifestations of God's grace, it needed to keep the natural and supernatural separate. By exteriorizing their active spiritual power, women could distance their physical selves from it. The unseen agent could also be the most fantastic imaginary friend, and/or mirror self. These entities gave women information, advice, and most importantly, a heightened sense of self-worth. The externalization of power and authority did not fracture the witch and prophet's identities; it multiplied possibilities. Anne Jefferies and Margaret Muschamp claimed access to power and knowledge (via fairies and angels) without the necessity of having to show anyone what their spirit counselors even looked like. Sarah Wight and Anna Trapnel saw themselves in their visions and attributed their unrequited desires to intimacy with Christ. Their spiritual second selves gave women a malleable framework within which they could respond to accusations and create a public version of their spiritual selves, and point towards incontrovertible enemies and allies. The witch and prophet were thus more than the sum of their own parts; their identities expanded beyond the sphere of their own minds and bodies. By studying women's relationships with their spiritual selves, we can continue to collapse the dichotomy between witch and prophet by illustrating the inadequacy of any kind of faerie/familiar and angel/demon taxonomy for capturing the multiplicities of identity these second selves made possible.

A Familiar Self: Disturbing Identities in Witchcraft Narratives

The multiplicity of the witch and prophet's identities extends to the texts in which these identities are both created and expressed. The witch's story is a series of organic narratives which are told, retold, elaborated on, and mutated. The witchcraft narrative resists linearity despite the best efforts of pamphleteers such as Thomas Potts, who rearranged the confessions in the Lancashire witch-trials into a chronological story. Such attempts to categorize, classify, and contain are indications of the anxiety this organic, dynamic discursive form could create. The witchcraft narrative answers questions that modern and contemporary audiences might not be privy to, while attempting to cultivate a confession to fulfill the legal burden of proof. Although the reader, like the examiner, might seek a single causal demarcation of the event that transforms woman into witch, her tale resists this superficial taxonomy. There is no single transfigurative element, though most witchcraft tales reference the instant she joins forces with a familiar as the moment a woman becomes witch. The existence of the familiar, rather than any single event in the woman's life, is what ultimately defines her.

The familiar became the legal center of the witchcraft trial. Familiars worked their way into confessions like metaphorical mice: through fissures in logic, in broad witness statements, and via zealous examiners looking for ways to entrap the witch. Powering their *maleficium* and miracles through the use of a second self, or subject extensions, as Frances Dolan defines them (183), provided these women a leg up into the supernatural world.

All the proof the legal system needed to convict a witch could be provided by admitting to keeping or dealing with a familiar, but at the same time, the familiar provided the woman a potential way of distancing herself from the allegations made against her. The familiar thus provides a bridge between the physical realities of the crime and the witch's supernatural powers. Allegations could be made against a woman nowhere close to the scene of a crime by accusing her invisible familiar of acting on her behest, providing convenient and malleable means to link women with whichever crime they were accused of committing, regardless of distance, motive, and probability. Familiars also provided a means for the witch to explain *maleficium* with minimal self-implication; they shared culpability with, and tried to transfer it to, naughty familiars. The familiar ultimately provided the woman and the courts the explanations they needed. Witches were continually linked to their familiars. Contemporaries point to them as infallible proof of preternatural powers and the women themselves seem to understand them as extensions of themselves, a shared identity between two or more bodies, and/or identities.

Because the familiar bridges the natural and the supernatural, it has the power to pull the unknown into the known, and the controllable. Frances Dolan writes that the witch's familiar acts as a model for the conflation of the dangerous and familiar in early modern England (5). Dolan argues that "the violence of witches' *maleficium* and of the processes of accusation and prosecution served to negotiate a disturbingly intimate relation, to violate an indistinct boundary in order to redraw it" (194). This process was in effect a communal creation of knowledge. The witch's published story begins *post facto,* at her trial or after her condemnation, and retroactively gazes towards some fictive genesis. The most banal details of these women's lives are, in revision after testimonial revision, encouraged to take on increasingly fantastic elements until they can accommodate the kind of power attributed to them. All eyes on her, she weaves version after version of tragic and fantastical stories; the familiar's form and importance become less nebulous with each version, serving as a focal point around which knowledge can be organized.

Doubling the Self: "so that two voices were to be heard at once"

The familiar does not merely act as a referent for the community and the courts prosecuting the witch; it also functions as a way for the woman herself to understand and come to terms with what is happening to her. The familiar is an externalized, dark self; it might be understood in Claude Lecouteaux's terms as a traveling soul, a spirit, a double, or an alter ego (26). Lecouteaux argues that humans have one, and often two, doubles, material and spiritual doubles; one which can take on animal form, and the other which can metamorphose, but which mainly appears in dreams and visions (147). The English familiar, as well as the prophetic second self, might have developed from these doubles, from the Norse *fylgjur,*[2] as an offshoot of the faerie tradition, as the result of a particular English fondness for pets, or simply as part of a precedent set by earlier witches.[3] The early Anglo-Saxon *fylgjur* provides a possible genesis for both the animal form of the English familiar, and for the understanding of it as a spiritual second self. Andy Orchard argues that the *fylgja* could be "partly . . . an externalized soul, but also an embodiment of personal luck or destiny" (50). Else Mundal defines the animal *fylgja* in medieval Scandinavia as an "alter ego" that "reflects a person's character" or "social position" (624-625). This understanding of the Norse *fylgja* appears in Robert Kirk's *The Secret Common-*

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[2] Claude Lecouteaux's text, *Witches, Werewolves, and Fairies,* translated into English by Clare Frock (2003) offers an extensive survey of the concept of spiritual doubles in the Middle Ages. According to Andy Orchard, in the *Dictionary of Norse Myth and Legend* (1997), the *fylgjur,* or fetch, (*fylgja* sing. *fylgjur* plur.) which may appear as women, but are most often perceived as animals, are "protective spirits that attach themselves to individuals, often at birth and remain with them right through death, when they may transfer their powers to another family member" (49-50). Although the *fylgja* is usually invisible, when it shows itself, it "augurs the person's death" (625). The English familiar, like the *fylgja,* attaches itself to a person, can be transferred among family (the familiar can be transferred at any time to friends and associates), and acts as an alter ego. According to Richard Bernard, the familiar physically reflects the witch's character and social position, and by confessing to have a familiar, a witch was signing her own death warrant. I would like to thank Professor Michael Fox for taking the time to talk monsters and bringing the *fylgjur* to my attention.

[3] Although Joan Willimot, Anne Jefferies, and Margaret Muschamp's cases point to fairy beliefs as contributing to the concept of the second self, Emma Wilby's article "The Witch's Familiar and the Fairy in Early Modern England and Scotland" illustrates only the broadest thematic similarities between fairy and familiar (2000). Likewise, Diane Purkiss' *In the Bottom of the Garden* does little to align fairy and familiar (2001).

wealth of Elves, Fauns and Faries (1691) as a "reflex man" a "co-walker," and a "Copy, Echo, or living Picture" who is a "Twin-brother and Companion, haunting him as his shadow, as is oft seen and known among Men (resembling the Originall,) both before and after the Originall is dead" (9-10). The straying of the spirit, the literal *ekstasis* of the witch's crime and the prophet's word, is reified by the familiar spiritual second self.

In *Satan's Invisible World Discovered* (1685), George Sinclair writes that Bessie Graham was arrested for witchcraft and imprisoned for thirteen weeks after drunkenly uttering some form of a threat to John Rankin's wife (who sickened and died). Graham was tried by the searcher's pin to see if she would react, and neither felt pain nor bled. Sinclair writes that he was never sure of Graham's guilt, and that he would have been glad if she was able to escape before prosecution. One day, however, on his way up to see Graham, something stopped Sinclair dead on the gaol stairs. Sinclair overheard Graham conversing with a low whispering voice which often overlapped her own:

> She began to speak again, and before she had well ended, the other voice speaketh as it were a long sentence, which though I understood not what it was, yet was so low and ghoustie, that I was certainly perswaded that it was another voice than hers. Besides, her Accent and manner of speaking was, as if she had been speaking to some other, and that other voice, to my best remembrance, did begin before she had closed, so that two voices were to be heard at once. (112)

Sinclair claims that in hearing the "Foul Fiend's voice," which was to his "certain hearing of a different Accent from hers, so hollow and ghoustie," he had the proof he needed to affirm she was a witch. Graham died without acknowledging it (*ibid.*).

Although Bessie Graham's story comes to us from Scotland, it is exemplary of the witch's dual identity. The witch was neither professional, nor upwardly mobile; she was threatening because she had a supernatural power her peers did not: power to influence and change the world around her. The witch was questioned, lauded, and attacked, yet she was believed to practice malefic magic with borrowed power. Frances Dolan proposes that witches were seen as "separate from or outside of their victims, yet simultaneously inside of them" (184). Like viruses, "alien but inside, hostile but included," witches were a threat because of the blurry line "between self and other" (184). As the witch was "inside (well-known members of the community and near neighbours) and outside (perceived enemies and sources of threat), moreover, she was simultaneously inside her own skin, and outside it, wrapped in the foreign, yet familiar skin of her spiritual second self.

This doubling involved physicality as well as identity. Familiars often lived with witches and their families, as part of the fabric of everyday life.[4] As Dolan points out, "witchcraft belief observed no fixed distinction between body and spirit," nor did it establish a "clear distinction between animate and inanimate matter, between the bodily self and object" (194); as a result, the physical presence of a familiar in the home did not outrage contemporary credulity. The witch's subjectivity also extended beyond her own skin, into her familiar, and, by extension, to attack the familiar was to attack the witch (194). The witch literally felt her familiar's pain; Diane Purkiss writes that because the "witch's body was thought to be coexistent with that of her familiar; if the latter was hurt, the former suffered" (*Witch,* 122). In *A Detection of Damnable Drifts* (1579), sympathetic magic was used to punish the witch through attacking her familiar. When a rat ran up the chimney and a toad fell down, John Eastwood (tormented with pain since denying Ellen Smith's son alms) grabbed the toad and

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[4] The witch was believed to feed it like a child, but with whole blood in place of purified breast milk; it drank blood like a parasite, but suckled it from a nipple like a child. By 1733, *The Art of Nursing* proclaimed without question that breast milk was made of blood, not chyle (the white milk nutritive fluid digested by the intestine) (19). Because seventeenth-century English science saw breast milk as blood, the belief that familiars were fed with unpurified blood illustrates the degenerate nature of their relationship. Likewise, as the mark turned into a nipple believed to be found in the genital region, the feeding of the imp took on a darker implication; the feeding imp was both a child and a lover trying to possess the body and soul of the mother. The witch's mark developed into a nipple or teats as feeding an imp began to be read as a quasi-maternal act, and was later fetishized into a sexual one. The fetishization of the lactating breast continues today in websites such as Lactation-Fetish.com, where the body of the lactating woman is represented solely by dark-skinned women, with the lactating breast as a phallus.

> thrust it in the fire and so held it forceably. It made the fire burn blue as azure, and the fire almost out; and at the burning thereof the said Ellen Smith was in great pain and out of the quiet, whereupon dissemblingly she came to the house ... and asked how all that were there did. (A6)

Purkiss likens this act to sympathetic magic, as when Dorothy Durrant threw the toad found in her child's blanket into the fire, an act which supposedly burnt Amy Denny.[5]

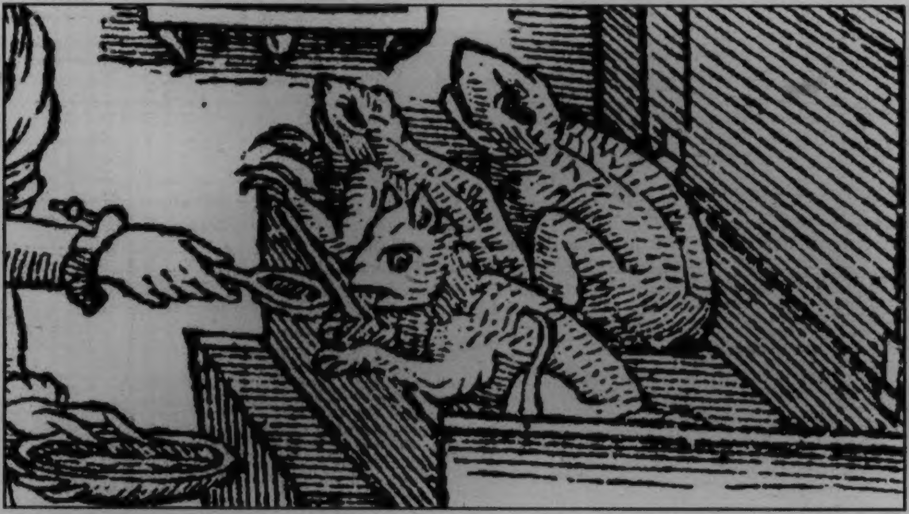

Figure 10a: Detail from "A rehersall both straung and true" (1579).

Because spiritual doubling had physical aspects, the female body of the witch was brought into clear focus in lieu of the absent form of her familiar. The prosecutor in a witch trial could not produce the physical body of the familiar, so the witch's body served as its substitute. It was often ideologically morphed into the antithesis of a godly maternity: she could be a mother who corrupted her own children by teaching them *maleficium* or an adoptive mother of demonic imps and familiars. The witch's demonic child embodied her moral and spiritual health and social rank. It was familiar and acceptable, but also like her, by virtue of a kind of family resemblance designed to encourage some innate recognition.

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[5] This event was reported in the infamous Lowestoft witch trials. In the tract, Denny was criticized for using counter-magic; here, Eastwood seems to escape like criticism.

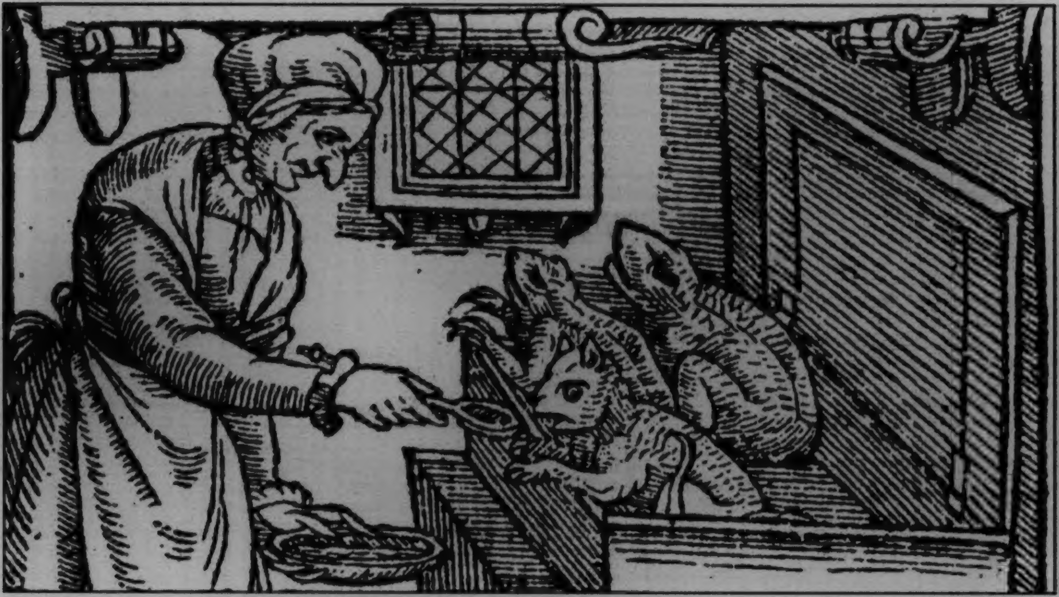

Figure 10b: A witch feeding her familiars, possibly representing Mother Dutten and her toad familiar, Mother Devell feeding her cat familiar, Jill, or Mother Margaret feeding her kitten familiar, Jenny. From A rehersall both straung and true *(1579).*

The demonic covenant was further articulated by naming the imps; the witch solidified her investment in the pact by mimicking a parental relationship with her familiar. Bernard argues that witches come together like godparents to christen their familiars in a kind of blasphemous inverted ceremony. He lists a series of familiars' names, both fantastic and banal:

> M.phastophiliss, Lucifer, LittleLord, Fimodes, David, Jude, Little Robin, Smacke, Litefoote, Non-such, Lunch, Makeshift, Swart, Plack, Blue, Catch, White, Callico, Hardname, Tibb, Hiff, Ball, Pass, Rutterkin, Dick, Prettie, Grissil and Jacke (109-110).

By naming the imp, the witch calls it into existence socially, but this social relationship does not reproduce normative familial power structures. The witch's contract with her familiar was based on a verbal, written, and/or implied intent rather than through biological necessity; by providing her familiar food and shelter, she had the power to compel her charge to enact her darker desires for vengeance on her neighbors. Like a mother eternally tied to her child, the witch becomes linked to her imp by accepting her position as caregiver and partner. *A True and Just Record* (1582) is replete with examples of familiars; the author (W.W.) emphasizes their importance by including a detailed synopsis of the witches and their familiars. Although the names and shapes of the familiars are, with the exception of Elyzabeth Bennet's lion, Suckyn, obvious and homey, the inclusion of this detailed list illustrates a fascination with finding the exotic and paranormal in the banal details of these women's lives. Pressed to name their imps by their examiners, women came up with names that betrayed a certain sense of humor and desperation. W.W.'s cross section of names is relatively consistent with the kinds of names familiars were given; their demonic nature was spelled out as were their childlike aspects, their fantastic nature, and their role as pseudo-pets. However, the power dynamics established through this relationship were not reliable, or consistent, and rarely ran one way. Familiars could be extremely demanding; the insensate marks which signified the witch's pact with the devil became marks or nipples from which imps (sometimes painfully) suckled blood, less as sustenance and more to demonstrate their power over the witch. The price the familiar exacted did not end with the witch's blood or nurture, ultimately costing her life and salvation. In this way, the witch's familiar simultaneously reinscribes and subverts early modern English concepts of maternal identity.

Critical Inquiries: "ridiculous and fondly collected"

Although the understanding of spiritual second selves outlined above help set up a working theoretical grid, practical issues of how women lived and were written about as witches are equally relevant in understanding the familiar as an extension of the witch's identity. The witch's relationship with the familiar evolved in the published cases, as did the contemporary theories surrounding them. Familiars are the sexy stuff which fills witness statements; younger witnesses enthusiastically gave detailed description of familiars to their enraptured audiences. Images of familiars were carved, printed, and recycled with great relish, in the woodcuts which illuminate pamphlets.

The familiar's animal form originated with the accusation against Mother Waterhouse (1566) and continued to be the norm for the next century. Although the publication of Waterhouse's narrative was probably influential, it seems unlikely that her emaciated and metamorphic cat Sathan was solely responsible for the propagation of the familiar in early modern witchcraft trials. Familiars as "diminutive demons" which appear in witchcraft tracts are singularly English in form and function (Rosen 31). C. L'Estrange Ewen understands English familiars as favorite animal companions (69) and Keith Thomas calls them "domestic pets or uninvited" animals (520). James A. Serpell believes that reading the familiar as the extension of a companion animal is only superficially plausible; they are all but absent from "continental narratives on the subject of witchcraft" (160). Serpell also dismisses the possibility that their presence was "a product of the English judiciary attempt to create a home-grown, legal definition of witchcraft" (160).

In 1604, James I may have made it illegal to deal with "wicked or evil spirit[s]," but their published appearance in Waterhouse's trial in 1566 illustrates how the familiar preceded the law. The concept of familiars was either firmly folkloric already, or sufficiently close to recognizable folklore that the familiar slid easily into its position at the witch's side.

The English familiar has no continental counterpart, but it does appear in a text, albeit in a different form, which was read throughout Europe: the Bible. Barbara Rosen notes that the

> Witch of Endor (I Samuel 28) had familiar spirit (Vulgate: pythonem), though the only supernatural being she materialized appeared as the dead worthy Samuel. Generations of theologians puzzled over this, generally deciding that she was the type of witch who prophesied by ventriloquity or the voice of a demon within her; with the aid of this she could also conjure up evil spirits. The woman of Acts 16:16-18 was possessed by her spirit rather than the possessor of it, and apparently had no control over it at all; but in neither case does 'familiar spirit' appear to mean what it does in England, though the quotations were used as 'proof' that there were 'familiars'. (30)

Although we cannot be certain how familiars became part of the English consciousness, familiars were, as a rule, satanic minions whose relationship with the witch either included a written contract to sell her soul to the Devil, or an implied one. Familiars appeared in a number of different forms, fantastic and banal, from miniature lions to house cats, from toads to gentlemen. The familiar was more than a sidekick; it was the magician, the pet *cum* master of the relationship. Although it followed the witch's orders, it did so with its own agency.

Reginald Scot tackles the idea of familiar spirits in *Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1584), but his influence on contemporary beliefs was not sufficient to define the familiar as a major legal and cultural element. Reginald Scot discussed the biblical references to familiars and attempted to refute their existence in early modern England. He writes:

> The Rabbines, and namely Rabbie Abraham, writing upon the second of Genesis, doe say, that God made the fairies, bugs, Incubus, Robin good fellow, and other familiar or domestical spirits[6] and divels on the friday; and being prevented with the evening of the sabbath, finished them not, but left them unperfect; and therefore, that ever since they use to flie the holinesse of the sabbath, seeking dark holes in mountains and woods, wherein they hide themselves til the end of the sabbath, and then come abroad to trouble and molest men. (364)

These spirits sound like English familiars, yet Scot dismisses these opinions as "ridiculous and fondly collected" (*ibid.*). They do, however, provide a basis for establishing how and why the devil appeared in the lowly forms available to the average seventeenth-century woman and comprehensible to her examiner as demonic. Scot goes on to ridicule those who are so "carnally minded, that a spirit is no sooner spoken of, but immediately they think of a black man with cloven feet, a pair of hornes, a tail, clawes, and eies as broad as a bason" (*ibid.*).[7] The devil, he argues, is too smart to "terrifie men with such ugly shapes, though he could doe it at his pleasure" (*ibid.*). The devil did not appear in dreadful shapes to early modern witches; few witches were frightened into covenants with their familiars because of their harrowing shapes. Rather, familiars are customarily small animals. Most witches report having imps small enough to hide in their homes or under their skirts; more common and domestic forms seem to be those they could conjure up on demand.

If Scot's *Discovery of Witchcraft* remains skeptical, forty years later, Richard

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[6] This study is interested in the domestic spirit or familiar. Curiously, although modern critics refer to the witch's familiar spirit as her familiar, contemporaries, as well as numerous witches themselves, referred to their familiars as "spirits" or "imps." Current usage of the term might then be traced back to Scot's reference to "familiar and domestic spirits."

[7] Temperance Lloyd refers to her familiar as "the blackman," and although frightening in a creepy way, he is not imposing; he is only as tall as her arm and rather toad-like in appearance. Lloyd seems to be integrating two elements, Satan and a common familiar-shape (the toad), into one entity.

Bernard's *Guide to Grand Jury Men* (1629) provides potential juries with an exhaustive list of characteristics for identifying familiars. Bernard argues Satan comes to men and women who suffer from, "besides that which is common, (as impenitency, prophanenes, unconscionablenesse, and irrespect to the power of Religion), distempered passions, and violence of affections, vaine curiosities, il company," as well as grief, poverty, rage and curiosity of the diabolic (98-100). Bernard, who gained his knowledge from witchcraft confessions, writes that Satan can appear in a "varietie of shapes and formes, as in the shape of a Man, or Woman, or a Boy, of a browne and white Dogge, of a Foale, of a spotted Bitch, of a hare, Moale, Cat, Kitling, Rat, dunne Chicken or Owle, of a Toade, or Crab" (103).[8] Bernard explains the variety of shapes as a manifestation of the moral or social character of the person the devil is trying to seduce:

> To base, sordid, filthy, nasty and blockish, more beastlike then Christian people, hee commeth in the baser formes and more abhorred shapes: to some of them in the shape of Toads, as you have heard, to be loathed, even of nature it selfe, if they had not lost it. But to a Faustus, in a religious persons habit, to Gaufredy a Priest, one of some learning and wealth, hee appeareth in some humane shape, like a gallant fellow, & so unto others: for he fashioneth himselfe so, as hee knoweth to be best liked, to whom hee commeth to shew himselfe, to make them his. (104)

By 1669, however, the reality of the familiar was losing steam. In "Protestant Witchcraft, Catholic Witchcraft," Stuart Clark, argues that "religious sects encouraged the view that was also central to witch-craft skepticism, that [the Devil's] role in human affairs could never take a material form" (176). He cites Lodowick Muggleton's publication of a "true interpretation" of the witch of Endor story in 1669. According to Muggleton '"there is no other Devil, or spirit, or familiar spirit for witches to deal withal, or to work any enchantments by, but their own imagination" (cited in Clark 176). In taking away the Devil's materiality, familiars were discarded as part of an unwelcome litter.

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[8] By 1645, little had changed in the popular imagination regarding familiars and how witches used and related to them. The information in *The Lawes against Witches, and Conjuration* seems cribbed from Bernard's text: "these Witches have ordinarily a familiar, or spirit, which appeareth to them; sometimes in one shape, sometimes in another, as in the shape of a Man, Woman, Boy, Dogge, Cat, Foale, Fowle, Hare, Rat, Toad, &c. And to these their spirits they give names, and they meet together to Christen them" (4).

Familiar Economics: It's Just a Work Thing

The first published witchcraft case, that of Mother Waterhouse and her familiar Sathan (1566), creates a blueprint for the economics of the familiar which will continue to frame published cases to come. Familiars were traded as desirable or formerly desirable commodities; because there was no assurance a familiar would be obedient, witches rid themselves of disobedient familiars or claimed that the familiars were operating under someone else's command. Benign house pets (cats, dogs, and frogs) were transposed into shape-shifting animals who worked for Sathan, if they were not actually him. Familiars first appear in published witchcraft cases in *The Examination and Confession of Certain Witches,* which seem to have been read as models for subsequent cases. This tract,

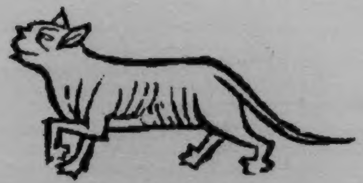

Figure 11: Mother Waterhouse's cat, Sathan, from The Examination and Confession of Certain Witches, *(1566)*

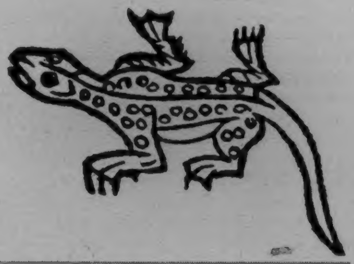

Figure 12: Sathan as a toad.

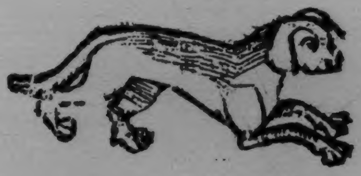

Figure 13: Sathan as he appeared to Joan Waterhouse

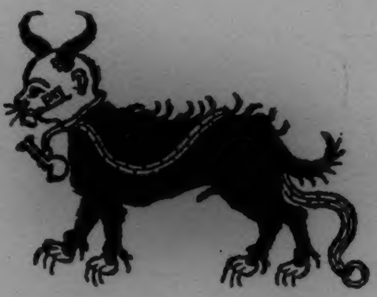

Figure 14: Sathan as he appeared to Agnes Browne.

replete with pictures of the familiar in all its forms, is like a picture book; the images reinforce the familiars' unnatural and striking demonic metamorphosis. By providing her familiar food and shelter, the witch had the power to compel her charge to labor for her. Familiars might also be traded between neighbors as a symbol of initiation into a demonic community, or as a commodity.

Elizabeth Francis testifies that her grandmother, Eve of Hatfield Peverell, taught her to renounce God and give her blood to Sathan. Sathan appeared as a cat, which she kept in a basket and fed with bread and milk. Francis named the cat Sathan and used it to increase her wealth (in sheep) and to try to get Andrew Byles to marry her. Sathan assured her he had the power to do it *if* she consented to let Byles "abuse her" first, which she did. Sathan seems to embody Francis' wishful thinking; it does not take a genius or a demon to know that men can be roped into marriage through unplanned pregnancies. Francis and Byles had sex, she became pregnant, and he left her. Sathan was not a miracle worker, but Francis did not dismiss him as a fast-talking shyster either. She lowered her expectations. Sathan embodied her unspeakable desire for retribution. She could not make Byles love her, but she could make him and his unborn child disappear forever. Francis attributed Byles' death and her own abortion to Sathan's lesser but more practical power; she also testified that Sathan subsequently turned into a toad to lame her husband and kill her child. The things that went wrong in her life were Sathan's fault. She hired him – but he was the killer, and he made her problems go away when she provided him food and shelter, and payment in the form of a drop of her blood. Fifteen years later, Sathan was passed on to Agnes Waterhouse[9] and continued to provide a variety of malefic services: destroying livestock, ruining beer and butter, and killing people. Waterhouse kept him on a warm bed of wool in a pot and fed him well for his efforts; he ate a whole unplucked chicken, and chased it down with blood from her finger or face, after killing three of the neighbors.[10]

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[9] In the 1579 tract *A Detection of Damnable driftes, practized by Three Witches,* Elizabeth Francis identifies Mother Waterhouse as "her sister, (long since executed for witchcraft)"; curiously, no familial connection is made in this tract (A5).

Although Sathan appears to be a kind of totem animal, linked to this community of women, he is not an unproblematic character. Joan Waterhouse, frightened by the sight of Sathan emerging (in the form of a huge dog) from the darkness under her mother's bed, revealed to him that she wanted her little neighbor, Agnes Brown, punished for refusing to give her bread and cheese. Sathan soon after appeared to Browne as a "thing like a black dog with a face like an ape, a short tail, a chain, and a silver whistle (to her thinking) about his neck, and a pair of horns on his head" (A4v). Next, Sathan arrived at Agnes Brown's milk house. His air of absolute entitlement was represented by the key he carried in his mouth; he opened the milk house door with it and took what he pleased. Sathan embodied Joan's repressed desire to move with entitlement and take what she wanted.

Sathan's relationship with this family, and their place in literary history, were far from over, however. Following the execution of her sister, Elizabeth Francis used her homespun witchfinding skills to identify witches and link them with familiars. Elizabeth Francis appears in *A Detection of damnable drifts* (1579), this time approached by a "spirit of white colour, in seeming like to a rugged dogge"[11] to whom she gave a crust of bread to "plague Poole's wife in the head" (*Witches* A4v). Careful not to further implicate herself, Francis makes no mention of a blood pact with this imp and quickly begins to accuse those around her. She establishes her authority by reminding the court that she knows a witch's mark when she sees one; her dead sister, Mother Agnes Waterhouse, had "the self same marks which she termeth 'nips'" (A5).[12] Francis was articulating what those around her already believed, that having a familiar was tantamount to committing malefic acts.

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[10] The cat handily transformed himself into a toad when Waterhouse spoke the Pater Noster so she could use the wool he slept on.[11] The image used in the text for the white dog is the same used as the big, frightening dog Agnes Waterhouse encountered.

[12] Elizabeth Francis implicates Elizabeth Lord for poisoning John Frances and bewitching Joan Roberts. Francis then accuses Mother Osborne of being a witch; she does not allude to any specific act, but assures the recorder that she knows her "to be a witch," because she has two witch's marks, one on a finger and one on her right leg.

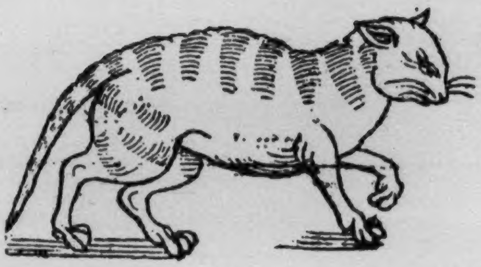

Figure 15: Mother Devell's cat Jill, or Mother Margaret's kitten Jenny from A rehersall both straung and true *(1579)*

In the ten years after Mother Waterhouse's conviction, it apparently became standard procedure for witnesses, witchfinders, writers, and judges to assume witches practiced their *maleficium* through familiars. The witches at Windsor, for example (Elizabeth Stile *alias* Rockingham, Mother Dutten, Mother Devell, and Mother Margaret), also kept a myriad of familiars (1579). The text begins by listing the witch, her supposed crime, and her familiar. Although Elizabeth Stile, with whom all the following information originates, mentions the shape, name, and food of the four women's imps, she does very little to connect them with the specifics of the women's crimes.[13] However, she clearly states that the blood was presented as payment for labor. Stile argues that the women used their imps like mercenaries, thugs and killers for hire:

> And further she saieth, that thei and euery of them, if any had angred them, thei would go to their Spirites and saie, suche a one hath angred me, goe dooe them this mischief, and for their hire, would giue them a droppe of their owne blood, and presently the partie was plagued by some lamentable casualtie (A8v).

Although the familiars in *A True and Just Record* (1582) supposedly lived in hidden places and fed on blood, their physical connection to the witch in terms of the blood pact or maternal feeding is oddly deemphasized.[14] The familiars' forms and functions seem to have been decided early; they are more like household pets or farm animals than demons—they perform a duty and are fed like everyone else. Here, imps eat barley, bread, cake, cheese, and hay, and drink beer, milk, and water. The familiars' blood-sucking seems to be secondary, happening as a nighttime activity, or when they were not otherwise fed. Imps, in these cases, acted more like the animals they were shaped as, and less like demons.

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[13] Elizabeth Stile claimed Mother Dutten fed her toad with blood from her flank, Mother Devell's black cat Jill was fed with blood mixed with milk, Mother Margaret fed her kitling with crumbs of bread and blood, and Elizabeth Stile fed her rat Phillip with blood from her right wrist.

By 1589, familiars had become partners in crime as well as mini-demons and naughty household pets. *The apprehension and confession of three notorious witches* (1589) presents three vastly different representations of the witches' relationship with their imps. Joan Cony,[15] Joan Upney, and Joan Prentice all admitted to having and using spirits; however, in none of their accounts do we find the witch approaching her familiar as anything other than a workmate. Cony had two black spirits shaped like frogs, which she named Jack and Jill. These rather selfish imps, who would steal milk for themselves and give her none, were impotent to hurt faithful Christians though they could injure cows and knock down piles of wood. Upney's imps were rather fragile things; the first, shaped as a mole, died, and she was given another mole and more toads (which had some skill at pinching, clapping,[16] and sucking people to death). However, one imp ran away and the other two perished when she fled at the witchcraft accusations. Given to her by a fellow witch, Upney's imps, though successful at killing, abandoned her or died. Even though she used the proper satanic rituals to acquire them, Cony could not use her imps to hurt humans even if she wanted to; they failed in the face of true faith. Her demonic alliance with them was transitory, and not particularly beneficial.

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[14] According to her son, Ellen Smith had three familiars, "the one called by her Great Dick was kept in a wicker bottle, the second named Little Dick, was put in a leather bottle, and the third, termed Willet, she kept in a wool pack" (A6v). The spirits magically disappeared, however, when the containers were found.

[15] Her name is spelled Cunny or Cuny in the tract, which is slang for vagina. This play on words is designed to degrade Joan Cony, emphasizing her lascivious nature which produced illegitimate children.

[16] In this sense, "clapping" means striking someone to hurt them.

Prentice's fiery-eyed ferret seems fierce indeed compared to Upney's wilting familiars. He demanded her soul, but Prentice retorted that "he demaunded that of her which is none of hers to give, saying: that her soule appertained onely unto Jesus Christ, by whose precious blood shedding, it was bought and purchased" (Bv). Prentice consented to give the spirit some blood in the manner of a good hostess; asked his name, the spirit replied "Bidd," and "vanished out of her sight sodainly" (*ibid.*). If naming an imp calls it into being, that Bidd already had a name indicates that he was already an individual. Bidd did not belong to Prentice; she had not sold her soul and had not received an imp as compensation. Like a hungry neighbor, showing up at dinnertime, eating and only then offering to contribute by helping clean up, Bidd would appear to Prentice at bedtime, leap onto her breast, suck blood from her left cheek and then offer to do some task for Prentice.

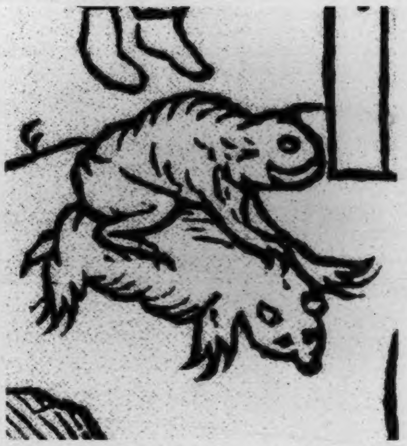

Figure 16a: Possibly Joan Upney's familiar on top of Joan Prentice's familiar Bid, detail from The apprehension and confession of three notorious witches *(1589)*

When she actually wanted his help, Prentice sang out "Bidd, Bidd, Bidd, come Bidd, come bidd, come bidd, come suck, come suck, come suck" (B2v). Bidd disobeyed her and killed a child when she told him to "goe unto Maister Glascocks house, and nippe one of his Children a little, named Sara, but hurt it not" (B2). After Prentice scolded him, calling him a villain, he disappeared for good. Prentice was adamant that she had never sold her soul to the devil in any way; when her relationship with Bidd turned sour, he, like a spurned lover, left as quickly as he had appeared. Bidd was a mercenary; Prentice paid him and expected him to follow orders.

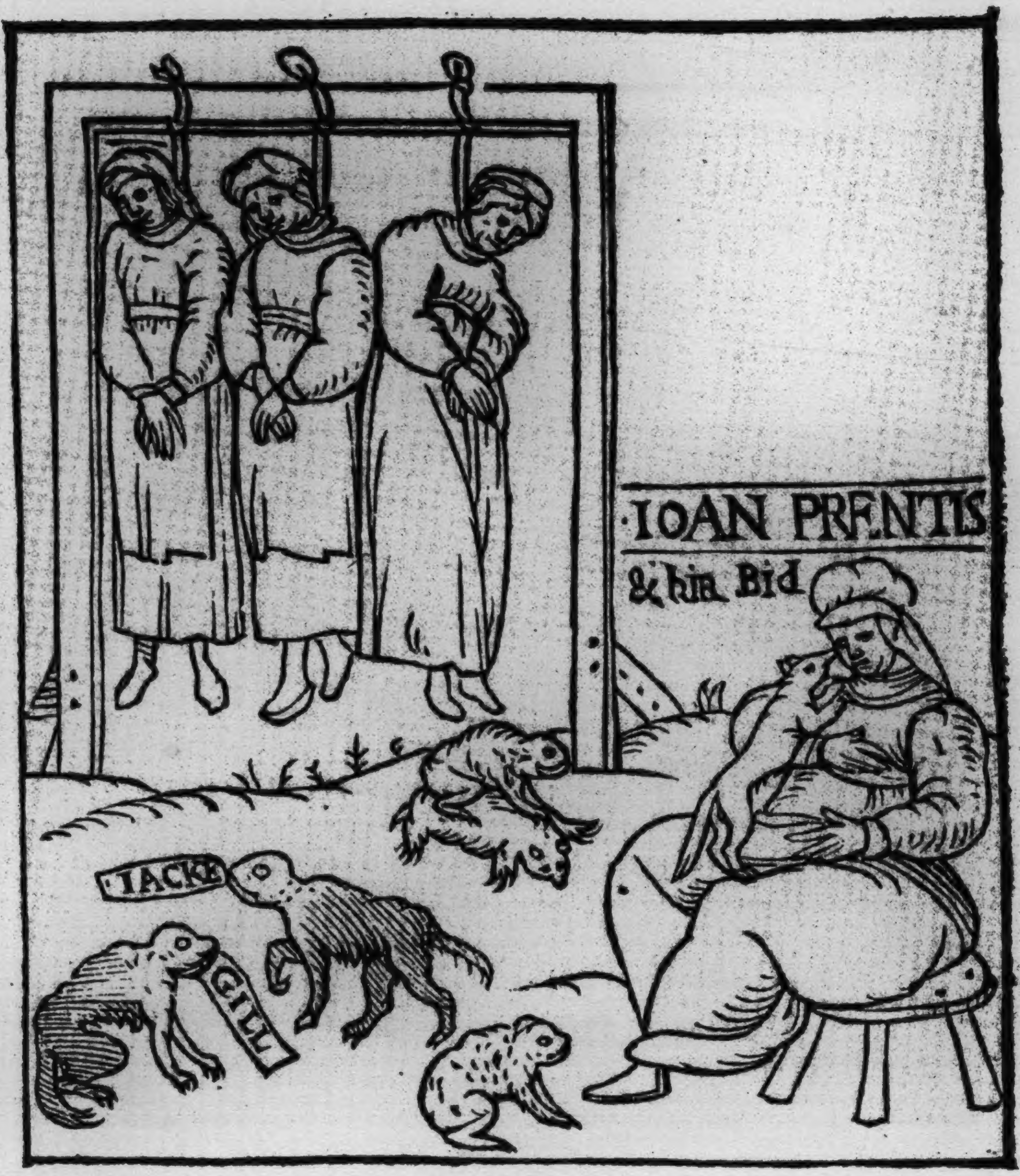
IOAN PRENTIS
& hir Bid
IACKE
GILL

Figure 16b: Joan Prentice, Upney, and Cony from The apprehension and confession of three notorious witches *(1589)*

By the seventeenth century, the increasing complexity of the familiar and its forms expanded to include humanoid shapes as well as animals. The relationship between the witch and her familiar was further complicated when the familiar came to offer the witch plausible deniability when faced with alleged crimes. In Thomas Pott's *The Wonderful Discoverie* (1612), Elizabeth Southern (Old Demdike) admitted to having a relationship with a spirit named Tibb,[17] who appeared to her in the shape of a boy in a bi-colored coat (half brown, half black) and demanded her soul. The same spirit showed up six years later as a brown dog, after that, as a black cat, and finally a hare. Anne Wittle (Old Chattox) also had a spirit who first appeared to her in the shape of a man named Fancie,[18] then a brown dog,[19] and then a bear.[20] Southern and Wittle did not see these spirits as an extension of themselves or their families. They were hostile and unwelcome partners in crime. Wittle and Southern's deliberate disassociation from these creatures encourages a reading of Tibb and Fancie as these women's shadows: aggressive, violent, and animalistic aspects of themselves which are as detrimental as they are beneficial.

In each of these cases, the witch/familiar relationship is represented not only as one of identity, but of economic partnership. The witch may have tried to explain her relationship with her familiar as one of trade; however, those on the outside looking in refused to see the familiar as an associate, and continued to characterize the alliance

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[17] Elizabeth Southern never called Tibb *her* spirit, but *the* spirit; although she maintained a relationship with him, Tibb was a free agent. Southern may have represented their tumultuous and violent relationship thus to create distance between herself and Tibb. Anne Wittle, who also had a tumultuous relationship with her imp Fancie, likewise refers to him not as *her* spirit, but as *the* spirit Fancie.

[18] Gibson points out that "once a story shape had been offered by a suspect or witness it could sometimes be repeated *ad nauseam* in very unconvincing ways and even retold by other people in their confessions" (87 note).

[19] Curiously, Fancie shows up as a brown dog when Anne Wittle asks him to bite a brown cow. Wittle seems to simply be re-using an adjective.

[20] Although Elizabeth Southern and Anne Wittle were vocal enemies, the numerous similarities in their narratives regarding the spirits Tibb and Fancie afford a number of fertile readings. Wittle, who claimed to have received Fancie through her neighbor, could have modeled her own story after Southern's. The women might also have reproduced their narratives within the confines of a script; the similarities in their stories might be the result of answering the same loaded questions. Similarly, they might have discussed their stories in advance, or have operated within a shared local belief system which dictated certain particulars about imps.

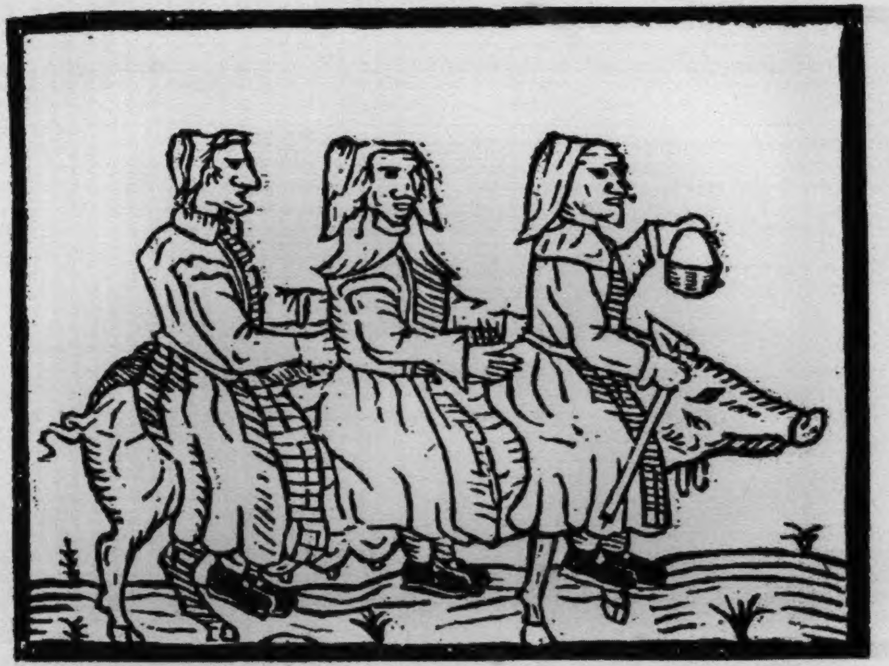

Figure 17: Agnes Brown, Katherine Gardiner, and Joan Lucus Riding off to visit Mother Rhodes from The Witches of Northamptonshire *(1612)*

between witch and familiar as demonic. The familiar was not only the witch's personal demon; it was also her demonic self. Although the imps in these cases do seem to have attempted malefic actions with at least partial success, the idea of demonic alliance can be wrung out of the narratives only by altering or misinterpreting the witches' representations. It could be that the standard details of the English imp narrative were still being worked out at this early stage of the game (they appeared for the first time only twenty-four years earlier), but it seems that none of these women considered their spirits as extensions of themselves or as acting out their dark desires. Rather, the women offered three different representations of how they might relate to these beings which were supposed to give them power.

Crying "Mew" and Wagging the Tail: Encoding Pet Familiars

If even the most minor economic relationship with her familiar could brand the witch as avaricious, the accused might engage a strategy of presenting the familiar as a pet, rather than as a child or a partner. The power relations between a companion animal and its owner are relatively straightforward and one-sided, compared to the potentially complicated give-and-take of a familial or economic relationship. Using the owner/pet relationship as part of their rhetorical strategy, accused women could insist that they never had much power at all, and could link that powerlessness to their familiars. Where there is no power and no action, there is no crime; a benign familiar makes for a benign woman—one hardly worth convicting.[21] There are moments in witchcraft tracts when women appear to be satisfying their examiners' demands for familiars with passive irony; they admit to having familiars, but their demons act more like house pets: they bark, wag their tails, hop, mew, and enjoy getting scratches and being stroked.

A True and Just Record (1582) is replete with examples of such familiars. The author emphasizes their importance by including a detailed list. This census of familiars contains names consistent with those generally given in confessions; the list also details the familiars' aspects and natures.[22] Pressed to identify their imps, women seem to have come up with names that betray a certain sense of humor and desperation. Under the constraints of the investigation, the accused appear to have presented the least convincing familiars possible, undermining their own confessions as they gave them. Joan Upney claimed that her sickly, fragile, and ineffective imps had died, and Joan Prentice claimed that Bidd disobeyed and abandoned her. Elizabeth Sawyer and Joan and Phillip Flower made their familiars as benignly pet-like as possible. It is possible that some witches were simply unsure how their familiars were supposed to act, and imbued them with well-known pet traits out of sheer failure of invention. However, a certain resistance seems to underlie the mewing and wagging. To deny having a familiar was possible, but uncommon. If their familiars were utterly unconvincing as demonic agents, however, accused women began to look less and less like witches.

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[21] In their confessions, most women identify the familiar as the magical agent, in order to avoid either mentioning or emphasizing their own use of magic. The cases of Johane Harrison and her daughter (d. 1606), however, radically de-emphasize the importance of familiars. In *The Most Cruell and Bloody Murther*, the pamphleteer asserts that Harrison admitted to having two spirits, one for killing men and one for killing cattle (in Joan Cony's narrative, her imps could hurt cattle but not men), but concentrates on explaining how Harrison's magic actually worked. Marion Gibson believes that the "lack of specificity and the gossipy tone . . . suggest that it was based on observation and overhearing testimony at the assizes. The two witches executed at the assizes in the summer of 1606 were in fact named Alice and Christian Stokes" (151).

[22] Where I have been unable to make out individual words, I have relied on Marion Gibson's edited version of "A true and just Record" to fill in illegible text (*Early* 123).

The strategy of making the familiar into a pet was not necessarily proof against repeated examinations. Margaret and Phillip Flower tried to defend themselves by pointing their fingers at their mother, Joan Flower (d. 1618/1619),[23] who was well-known in the community because "shee dealt with familiar spirits and terrified them all with curses and threatening of revenge" (*Wonderful* C3v).[24] Margaret and Phillip's defense strategy, however, included emphasizing the pet-like qualities of their cat, Rutterkin. Rutterkin's transformation from pet to familiar illustrates the strong expectations set by repeated examinations, and the possibility that the accused themselves might, after repeated examinations, morph into witches. Neither of the Flowers admitted to having a familiar early in their testimonies;[25] however, on January 22, 1618, Margaret testified that Joan Flower had owned a cat named Rutterkin. Margaret claimed that her mother, in order to punish Henry Lord Rosse, had rubbed Rutterkin with his glove before dipping the cat in hot water and pricking it innumerable times. Sent off, "Rutterkin whined and cryed Mew" (F4) —not particularly uncanny behavior, given the situation. The more often the accused were examined, however, the more malefic Rutterkin became. By February 4th, Phillip

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[23] The dates in this tract are in question; not only do the dates provided by the witches fail to match up with the court's presumed chronology of the events, but the testimonies are printed out of order and, according to Marion Gibson, the pamphleteer "seems to be using the traditional dating system, in which the year date changes at Lady Day, 25 March" (279). The exact dates, therefore, as in many tracts, should be taken with a grain of salt.

[24] The examinations of Margaret and Phillip Flower, Anne Baker, Joan Willimot, and Ellen Greene all appear in the same pamphlet. Joan Flower seems to have died on the way to the gaol.

[25] When they refer to Rutterkin, they note it was their mother's cat (a logical course of action since their deceased mother could neither refute nor be injured by the accusation).

Flower testified that Rutterkin was a spirit and that she "often saw the cat Rutterkin leape on her shoulder, sucke her necke" (F3).[26] By February 25th, both openly admitted to having spirits. Margaret and Phillip Flower attempted to prove they were not witches by shifting focus onto their mother; their mother's cat gave them a way to satisfy the legal demand for a familiar. Their strategy, sadly, collapsed under intense scrutiny, and Rutterkin became more demonic and less feline.

Similarly, Elizabeth Sawyer (d. 1621), who voluntarily gave herself up to prove she was not a witch, began her response to interrogation by vehemently denying having either a witch's mark or an imp. According to Henry Goodcole, the author of *A Wonderfull Discoverie of Elizabeth Sawyer,* Sawyer confessed to owning an imp only after she had already been convicted. After what even Goodcole admits was "great labour" and intensive scrutiny, Sawyer constructed a familiar narrative; with all the events and players correct, however, she got the details wrong (Goodcole B4), and her familiar is one the least devilish in the literature. Sawyer recollected how her white (or black) dog-shaped devil, Tom, would happily bark to acknowledge that he had followed her orders. She mentions that, upon seeing him, "I would stroake him on the backe, and then he would becke unto me, and wagge his tayle as being therewith contented" (D). This affectionate and unremarkable behaviour seems out-of-place in a being who would allegedly scratch and pinch children and cattle to death. Sawyer's account poses two major questions: why did she, in the end, admit to having an imp, and why did she make this animal-embodiment of Satan so pet-like? In all likelihood, after an intense interrogation and the emotional devastation of being convicted, Sawyer was too exhausted to fight anymore; suggestible and terrified, she gave Goodcole what he wanted: a familiar. It was not the kind of familiar that Goodcole wanted; whether constructed in an attempt to show she was lying, or out of ignorance, Sawyer's wagging, barking Tom, who liked to have his back scratched, is more a house pet than a demon. Her confession resists her accusers even after she herself has capitulated.

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[26] The "her" here is ambiguous; it could be her Joan's or Margaret's neck. Margaret and Phillip Flower seem to have developed familiars in response to twenty-one days in the gaol and persistent questioning. That the two women's confessions coincide on some points (each claimed to have a white spirit which fed on a spot under her left breast) suggests possible collaboration with the examiners. While developing responses which would satisfy the legal burden of proof for identifying them as witches, they sought to deflect attention from any culpability in the murders.

Hopkins, Watching Familiars, and Prayer Circles

If the familiar, as a spiritual second self, supported a multiplicity of meanings (as an extension of the self, a double self, a child, an economic partner, and a pet), how is it possible for this slippery and sometimes subversive being to become, ultimately, narrowly defined as a blood-sucking demon? This shift in meaning entailed an almost complete shift in authority from the witch, the witness, and the prosecutor, to the figure of the witchfinder. In the seventeenth-century, this role was infamously filled by the Witchfinder General, Matthew Hopkins, and his associate, John Sterne.[27] Unlike most members of the legal apparatus (examiners, judges, jailers), Matthew Hopkins claims to have seen the imps of the women he identified as witches. In claiming to see familiars, Hopkins usurped the most potent power the woman as witch had; he constructed the reality of the women facing the noose. Whereas, in the past, it had been enough to force women into admitting to having imps, Hopkins, paid per conviction, acted as an eyewitness to their presence. In claiming to see the imps, Hopkins could ensure their presence in the trial records,

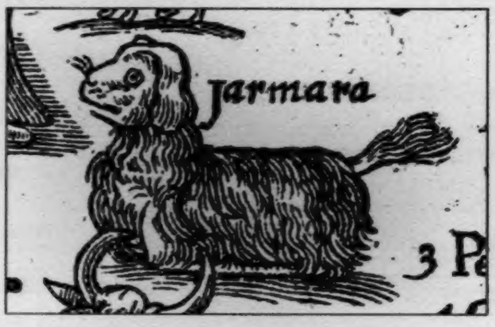

Figure 18: Detail of Hopkins Illustration: Jarmara

construct the familiar's shape and attitude, and facilitate the kind of confession he desired. While women, to this point, had possessed the power to create a multitude of different representations of their familiars, and in doing so, tailor their own identity, Hopkins began to narrow the meaning of familiar-related evidence to his own Continental understanding of the woman as witch and the familiar as demon.

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[27] Malcolm Gaskill's *Witchfinders* (2005) provides an excellent study of Matthew Hopkins and John Sterne. Also see James A. Serpell "Guardian Spirits or Demonic Pets" (2002) 163-169; James Sharpe, *Witchcraft in Early Modern England* (2001), Robin Briggs' chapter, "Witchfinders and Witch cures, in *Witches and Neigbors. The Social and Cultural Context of European Witchcraft* (1996) 169-218, Louise Jackson "Wives, Witches, and Mothers" (1995) 71; Jeffery B. Russell *A History of Witchcraft* (1980) 97-100; Keith Thomas Religion and the Decline of Magic (1971) chapter 14; Alan MacFarlane *Witchcraft in Tudor and Stuart England* (1970) chapter 9;

In taking control of the discourse of the familiar, Hopkins was able to skew its representation. In turn, Hopkins represented himself as having the preternatural power to see the familiar, which was otherwise invisible to the legal apparatus, making himself a suddenly necessary component in the trial process. Although animal-related evidence appeared in other mid-century tracts, as did an increasing interest in sexualized relations between the witch and her familiar, James Serpell suggests that "animal-related evidence was overrepresented in the 1645-46 prosecutions brought by the self-styled witchfinders, Matthew Hopkins and John Stearne" (163).[28] Hopkins and Stearne also "displayed particular inventiveness when it came to the names of familiars" (174).[29] In watching Elizabeth Clark, Hopkins testified that

> within a quarter of an houre after there appeared an Impe like to a Dog,

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[28] Serpell continues by claiming that "the extraordinary number of prosecutions initiated by Hopkins and Stearne, and the extreme methods they used for finding evidence and extracting confessions, have given them a unique position in the annals of English witch persecution" (163). In "Witches, Wives and Mothers: witchcraft persecution and women's confessions in seventeenth-century England" (1995), Louise Jackson notes that, by "1645, however, some of the more elaborate notions were beginning to take hold (perhaps disseminated by Matthew Hopkins himself) and the Suffolk trials refer directly to the making of covenants and sexual activity with the devil. The relationship between the witch and her familiars was highly sexualized" (71).

[29] Mother Lakeland (d. 1645) supposedly had three imps, "two little dogs and a mole" (7); Joan Williford (d. 1645) confessed that the Devil came to her in the shape of a little dog named Bunn, and that although she "was loath to forsake" God, she sold her soul to the devil for twenty years of Bunn's service (*Examination* 1). Williford further stated that "Jane Hot, Elizabeth Harris, Joan Argoll were her fellows" and that her devil had, in the shape of a mouse, come into the gaol to suck her (2). Joan Cariden, whose examination appears in the same tract, was also persuaded to sell her soul to the Devil by a "black rugged dog" who had sucked her at various times, but did not hurt her when he did so (3). Cariden invented this story in her second examination; in her first she only admitted that "a rugged soft thing [had laid] upon her bosom which was very soft, and she thrust it off with her hand" (2-3). In this moment, she felt that God left her (2-3). Jane Hott also confessed that a hedgehog

> had usually visited her, and came to her a great while agoe, about twenty yeares agoe, and that if it sucked her it was in her sleep, and the paine thereof awaked her, and it came to her

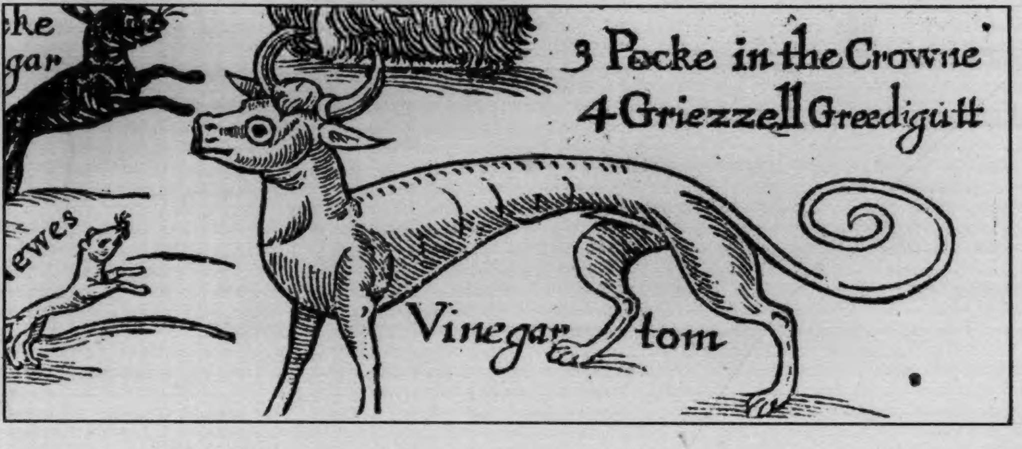

Figure 19: Detail of Hopkins illustration: Vinegar Tom

> which was white, with some sandy spots, and seemed to be very fat and plumpe, with very short legges, who forthwith vanished away: And the said *Elizabeth* immediately there appeared another Impe, which shee called *Vinegar Tom,* in the shape of a Greyhound with long legges: And the said *Elizabeth* then said that the next Impe should be a black Impe, and should come for the said Master *Sterne,* which appeared, but presently vanished: And the last that appeared was in the shape of a Polcat, but the head somewhat bigger (*True and Exact* Av).

These familiars are Hopkins' creations, not Clark's, although in naming them, she calls them into being. Elizabeth Clark also testified that the "Devil appeared to her in her house, in the likenesse of a white Dog, and that she calleth that Familiar Elimanzer" (10).[30] How much Hopkins coached or influenced Clark's own confession cannot be known. However,

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> once or twice in the moneth and sucked her, and when it lay upon her breast she strucke it off with her hand, and that it was as soft as a Cat. (4)

Elizabeth Harris, the last woman examined in the tract, likewise confessed that "about 19 yeeres agoe the Divell did appeare to her in the forme of a Muse"; she scratched her breast and gave the imp her blood with which she wrote a covenant (5). This "Muse" was likely a mouse. Harris brings the narrative back to Williford, whom she claims had meetings with Hott and Goodwife Pantery, and gave her information about a boat sinking. This pamphlet illustrates the development and cross- pollination of ideas in imp narratives. Like a game of "Telephone," in this mimetic shift, forwarded information changes slightly with each transmission.

Clark's imps, like most of the imps witches confess to owning, appear as separate common animals, lacking the bizarre characteristics Hopkins' testimony assigns them.

One of the consistent thrusts of Hopkins' editing of the familiar was a movement towards the ritualized and sexualized Continental understanding of witchcraft. Much of Hopkins' case was based on Rebecca West's testimony. With her account, he was able to secure the sexual elements found in European witchcraft trials, the existence of a pseudo-coven of familiar-venerating witches that he had tried so hard to prove, and also the active presence of demonic and vampiric imps. Rebecca West's testimony also introduced the image of witches praying to familiars, a new concept in early modern English witchcraft trials.[31] West may have done so because she was unfamiliar with the usual conflicted relationship between witches and spirits, responding to Hopkins' very directed queries, or interested in developing her own wild narrative thread. She testified that Anne Leech, Elizabeth Gooding, Hellen Clark, Anne West, and herself had "met all together at the house of the aforesaid Elizabeth Clark in Mannyntree, where they together spent some time in praying unto their Familiars, and every one in order went to prayers" (11). Hopkins later testified that West told him, as part of her initiation into the circle of witches, the Devil "appeared to them in the shape of a dogge; afterwards in the shape of

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[30] The other imps who appear in the woodcut for *A Discovery of Witches* (Pyewacket, Pecke in the Crown, Grizel Greedigut, and Newes) appear for the first time in Hopkins' tract. Their placement in the image with Anne West and Elizabeth Clark suggests that they number among the imps found in Essex in 1645. However, Hopkins was just as likely padding his own text to make the familiars more plentiful and exotic. Serpell notes the "witch finders recycled some of these unlikely names.... 'Griezel' and 'Greedigut' are later named as the familiars of Jane Wallis" (177). Margaret Murrey writes that "Joan Wallis of Keiston said [that the Devil came to her] and shee asked what his name was, and he said his name was Blackeman, and asked her if she were poore, and she said I; then he told her he would send one Grissell and Greedigut to her, that shall do any thing for her. And after Blackman was departed from her, within three or four dayes, Grissell and Greedigut came to her, in the shapes of dogges with great brisles of hogges haire upon their backs.'" (139). Author Bill, whose story appears with that of Agnes Browne and Joane Vaughn in *The Witches of Northamptonshire* (d. 1612), supposedly had three imps, Grissil, Ball and Jacke; the narrator laments not knowing their forms.

[31] Temperance Lloyd would later fall to her knees in the street in front of her familiar, the blackman. Lloyd confessed that he sucked blood from a nipple in her genitals in this moment. This seems like an inversion of taking communion and might have developed from Hopkins' desire to read English witchcraft cases like European ones.

two Kitlyns; then in the shape of two dogges" (14). Evidently, the familiars paid homage to all the other women by jumping on their laps and kissing them, but ignored her as one of the initiated. The Hopkins trials marked the first occasion a member of the legal system actually saw the witch's familiars. Although Hopkins may have based most of his findings on West's testimonies, his obvious and undue influence marred the trials; witchhunting was never the same.

The sexualized and demonic familiar Hopkins so consistently attempted to produce through West's testimony appears fully, and menacingly, formed in *A True and Impartial Relation.*[32] In this tract, the concepts of familiar as partner or pet are completely subsumed. The familiar become, instead, the darkest part of Temperance Lloyd's identity, a part she has externalized into a demon that demands public, sexualized worship and submission in the middle of busy streets. Although no longer hidden, like earlier familiars who hid under beds and in pots, Lloyd's blackman remains for the most part an unseen and controlling bogeyman, who feeds from under the darkness of Lloyd's skirts as he feeds on the weakness of her body and mind. Although witchhunting and prosecutions for witchcraft had petered out by the late 1600's,[33] *A True and Impartial Relation* goes to great lengths to contextualize Temperance Lloyd, Mary Trembles, and Susanna Edwards (d.1682) within demonic pacts, entered into through their use of imps.[34] *A True and Impartial Relation* has received little critical attention because Lloyd, Trembles, and Edwards[35] seem simply to agree with their examiners, and to reproduce whatever story they are prompted with. Temperance Lloyd repeatedly retools her confession; with each suggestion, her relationship with the blackman becomes more complex, intimate, abusive, and stretches further back in time. Her familiar is not humanoid, nor is he an animal. He is a demon that demands sexualized worship:

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[32] Lyndal Roper's examination of Regina Batholome's relationship with the Devil as a lover, father, and husband in, "Oedipus and the Devil," points to the creation of confession as collaboration between the confessor and interrogator; the confession is ultimately a conflation of both their desires and fantasies (340).

[33] There was to be a lull in published witchcraft tracts after the Hopkins trials. Although the Lowestoft witch trials took place in 1664, they were not published until 1682, the same year that Temperance Lloyd was executed for witchcraft. *A Tryal of Witches* does not display the intense interest in the particulars of the witches' imps typical of this literature. Elizabeth and Deborah Pacy run about grabbing invisible entities and throwing them in the fire, blaming bees for putting pins in them, and seeing suspiciously large dogs, but the tract is missing the usual question-and-answer section dedicated to the discovery of imps. Elizabeth and Deborah Pacy shouted to the invisible spirits of Rose Cullender and Amy Durrant, challenging them to stop sending their imps in their place; however, with the exception of the witch's marks supposedly found on Rose Cullender, there was no proof of the women's involvement. Cullender and Denny "were much urged to confess but would not" (59). No confession meant no imps.

> she did kneel down to him in the Street, as she was returning to her own house, and after that they had tormented the said Grace Thomas in manner as last above mentioned. Being demanded of what stature the said black Man was, saith, that he was about the length of her Arm: And that his Eyes were very big; and that he hopt or leapt in the way before her. (15)[36]

In this gollum-like form, the black man solicits, tempts, cajoles, threatens, and beats her into tormenting Grace Thomas. When asked how long she had "discourse with the devil in the shape of the blackman," Lloyd obediently reiterated the question and provided a concurrent confession: on the "30th day of *September* last past she met with the Devil in the shape or likeness of a black Man, about the middle of the Afternoon of that day" (13).[37] Although she implied she had only known the blackman since the previous September, Lloyd later confessed to years of familiarity and partnership with the blackman, leading

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[34] The author insists this tract is "the onely True, Authentick, and Exact Account; and that if any others creep abroad, they are lame and imperfect" (A2).

[35] Mary Trembles testified that the Devil appeared to her as a lion. Susanna Edwards testified that the Devil came to her in the shape of a gentleman, although "something in the shape of a little boy, which she thinks to be the devil did suck at her breast" (36).

[36] Thomas Eastchurch testified that he had heard Lloyd describe the blackman as having "blackish cloaths" (22). She knew it was the devil who approached her, she proclaimed in her last confession, by "his eyes" (39). Curiously, this statement is followed by a question mark, which might be a typographical error, or signify that Lloyd was looking for the answer she was expected to give.

[37] Lloyd identified the magpie which landed on Grace Thomas' chamber window as the blackman (12). When asked how long she had a relationship with the Devil "in the shape or likeness of a blackman," Lloyd duly responded that she had met the Devil, in "the shape or likeness of a blackman," on September 30th (13). She reiterated that the Devil "in the likeness of a blackman" led her up the stairs to Grace Thomas' room, and that "the Devil in the shape of said black man" was there with her on the 30th of June, as well (14, 15). This theme plays on an endless loop throughout the tract. Why did Lloyd compulsively reiterate this phrase? It may have been an editorial addition, designed to clarify her thoughts to the reader and situate her various statements within the confession. However, I believe that there is something more to this phrase. "In the shape and likeness of a blackman" appears to be a meme passed between Lloyd and her interrogators. This

to the death of Jane Dallyn, Lydia Burman,[38] Anne Fellow,[39] and William Herbert[40] in 1670. In Lloyd's final confession, however, she revealed that she had only met the blackman once before, in the "woeful shape" of a black bull,[41] "beat [her] about the head and back" for not killing Mrs. Grace Thomas (40).[42] Twelve years before this event, she said, the Devil had offered to relieve some of her burden, and she had replied that "the Lord has enabled me to carry it so far and I hope I shall be able to carry it further." Lloyd, by depicting herself refusing to make a bargain with the Devil then, and by claiming that he had never promised her anything, may have been trying to prove that there was no contract between them. For Lloyd, the story of the blackman gave her an entry into narrative production. He was the compass that enabled her to navigate the plotlines she was forced

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piece of information moves virally, and continues to infect Lloyd in each telling; the more she hears and repeats the phrase, the more real the blackman becomes for her, and by extension, her examiners. The phrase becomes as much an *idée fixée* for the reader as it does for Lloyd. The reader is hypnotized by it, and any other forms the Devil may have assumed fall away.

[38] Burman, who testified against Lloyd at her first trial, said Lloyd appeared to her in the shape of a red pig; the memory of this accusation may have influenced Lloyd when she retold her story about Grace Thomas' assault. When she first related the story on July 3rd, Lloyd mentioned that she had seen a cat enter Thomas Eastchurch's shop; on July 4th, she claimed that *she* had been that cat (18). This unusual transfiguration shows Lloyd extending her identity to include what should have been an external force: her familiar. In this moment, Lloyd herself becomes the Devil's familiar.

[39] Here the writer clarifies matters by stating that it was either this particular blackman, "or some other blackman or devil" who was integral in Fellow's death. The scribe might have been trying to compensate for the fact that Lloyd's earlier testimony claimed she had only known the blackman a few months.

[40] This confession corresponds to her last words, in which she claimed that she was tempted by, but refused, the Devil twelve years earlier.

[41] Only here does Lloyd say that the blackman was in the shape of a bull. John Hill asks Lloyd, "did you never ride over the Arm of the Sea on a Cow?" I cannot make any sense of this question. In *The Trial, Condemnation and Execution of Three Witches*, the anonymous writer notes that she denied sinking a ship and causing a boy to fall from the top mast and break his neck (or drown). This explains the reference to "the Sea," but the meaning of the blackman's transmutation into a cow or bull remains mysterious. It may be a convoluted reference to Ovid's Myth of Europa, in which Zeus turned himself into a bull and tricked Europa into riding on his back, across the ocean to Crete; there, she was impregnated by Zeus and became Minos' mother. Minos later asked Poseidon for a sign that he was the true king of Crete, and Poseidon sent a gleaming white bull to him over the waves. Minos refused to sacrifice the bull to Poseidon, who revenged himself by making Pasiphae, Minos' wife, lust wildly after the bull. Pasiphae had a carpenter build a wooden cow which she hid within to mate with the bull; their offspring was the Minotaur. The Minotaur can be read as a sign of degenerated humanity, like Lloyd's blackman, and Hill's question may be a reference to Lloyd's alleged sexual congress with her familiar. I would like to thank Aida Patient for bringing all of these lusty sea-faring cows and bulls to my attention.

[42] Here Lloyd says that the worst thing she ever did was torment Thomas; she goes on to assert that she suffered a beating for refusing to kill her, however.

to traverse, representing herself as a victim, not a perpetrator, fallen prey to a violent and evil familiar.

The familiar's conversion from a double, a partner, and/or a pet, into the sexualized, venerated demon that so suited the European palate, represented a movement from spiritual second self to pawn of the legal system. Although admitting to having a familiar placed the accused within a rigid confessional discourse, from within this space the witch could try to represent her familiar as she wanted herself represented – just as benign, successful, or powerful as she herself wished to be seen. The witch's one and only power, once accused and imprisoned, was the power to construct herself from within the very narrow and suffocating boundaries of the confession; making the familiar a demon mutated it from a shifting, organic, and multifaceted, if multifarious, being, to one which reinscribed the witch, not only within legal discourse, but also the religious canon.

For this reason, it is crucial that any critical inquiry into the role of early modern English familiars be sensitive to attempts to standardize the meaning and role of the familiar. Although this investigation has looked at the familiar as a spiritual second self, from within that space, the accused woman could define the nature of her relationship with the entity which itself defined her as a witch. Because only the witch could see her familiar, what she saw tells us as much about her own desire to create identity as what she spoke or how her body was inscribed.

Spanning the Gap: Prophetic Witches, Faeries, Turkeys, and Angels

The witch was not alone in having a spiritual second self. Her dark sister, the prophet, was likewise doubled as a result of her participation in the prophetic trade. Similarly, the ecstatic reprobate, the possessed, and the obsessed seem all to have a double, a spiritual informant which gives them impressive oracular power and allows them to share the spotlight with their dark sisters. Although this connection seems to suggest that the possessed woman acted as a mid-point between poles of witch and prophet, reading the spiritual second selves of these women illustrates the irresponsibility of forcing them into that kind of linear continuum. Like the frustrating zoo of beings which together constructed the familiar, the spiritual second selves of prophets provide a wild, organic view of these women, rather than the neat and tidy one critics might seek. However, what can be learned from this study of the prophet, possessed, obsessed, and ecstatic, is that these women extended the self with a double – a pipeline straight to the other world.

One of the things that makes these women so troubling to a well-groomed dichotomy of witch-versus-prophet is the radically indefinable nature of all spiritual second selves. The spiritual second self, prophetic, demonic, or folkloric, had numerous shapes and manifestations. In the same way that not all women fell into the category of witch or prophet, demons were not easily distinguishable from the fairies, angels, and spirits to which contemporaries assigned the origin of oracular insight.[43] Although relators, narrators, divines, and judges saw women who displayed spectacular powers of insight or foreknowledge as necessarily in cahoots with some external spiritual agent, most women represented these relationships as extensions of their own subjectivity. These women/ prophets acknowledged that they were in conversation with a power outside themselves, but their relationship with this power was based on their own spiritual specialness. They did not lose their identities; rather, they multiplied them.

Of the fairies, angels, and spirits circling in the air of the early modern English consciousness, critics often look to the fairy as a possible ancestor of the English familiar. However, the fairy refuses to speak on this matter. Its similarities to the early forms of the familiar suggest, not an evolution, but a shared underlying understanding of the spiritual second self. These two beings, familiar and fairy, tangential like the witch and prophet, tell us much more about the women who used them when we acknowledge their parallel roles as spiritual second selves, rather than force them into an artificial genealogy. Although Emma Wilby acknowledges a slipperiness in the categories of fairy and familiar, she notes that the areas with which "the familiar was primarily associated — that is, human/animal health, domestic/farming processes and the general securing of material prosperity — were also areas of central concern to many types of fairy" (285). Conversely, "certain skills which were primarily associated with the fairies — such as the ability to divine the future, seek out lost goods, identify criminals and so on — were often associated with the familiar" (*ibid.*) Although the categories become even messier when we deal with prophetic witches, ecstatic accusers, and spectacularly reprobate sinners, the fairy familiar, like the women who challenge the dichotomy of witches and prophets, illustrates the essential fluidity of spiritual identity and authority in early modern England.

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[43] Anne Bodenham had no spirit, imp, familiar, or demon who worked for her. Bodenham saw herself as a Magus who used real magic; as such she did not need to rely on petty peasant witchery for power. Joan Peterson, likewise, never admitted to having a familiar, nor was she tried for using one. Ursley Kempe, whom Marion Gibson supposes "probably gained a gratifying sibylline reputation by her confession, since she was consulted in prison by several sick people who had heard of her much-confessed cunning," may have seen herself as a cunning-woman, but was affiliated by her son with numerous familiars (33). Being a cunning-woman neither saved one from the gallows, nor kept one from being externally invested with a double self. Owen Davies notes that both Peterson and Bodenham were identifiable cunning-women, but were still executed as witches.

Finding a source for female oracular power was of particular concern for early critics who did not want to imagine a world where women had achieved oracular power through their own devices. Contemporary critics were suspicious of all women claiming spiritual authority, but even more of women who claimed they could see into the future. Johann Weyer, in *De praestigiis daemonum* (1583), writes extensively on the history of false prophecy as originating with demons who may only be right occasionally, or by coincidence (22 & 146-152). Increase Mather, in *A Disquisition Concerning Angelic Apparitions* (1692), also explains how to tell a false visitation from a real one (cf. 14-15 &c.). If prophets who stomping their feet on their tubs might still be accused of false prophecy, those less interested in attributing their visionary skills to God were placing themselves unambiguously among the false prophets, and, therefore, among the witches.

The difficulties inherent in deconstructing the dichotomy between witch and prophet are themselves evidence of just how earnest and thorough early modern English critics were in constructing a rigid identity for women claiming unusual powers.[44]This process of construction rarely favoured the woman involved; Anne Baker provides an excellent example of how community anxiety could push the identity of an oracular woman towards the malefic, rather than the divine. Anne Baker's second self manifested itself in visions of planets, a voice which prophesied, and a hand which appeared to her. Although the foreknowledge Baker received saved her and her employer, she did not attempt to validate its source with Christian symbolism; this arrogance, in the eyes of contemporaries, proved her wickedness.[45] Although Baker said she had prayed (we assume to God, though this may not have been her accusers' assumption), she claimed agency for the effectiveness of the prayers, for her control over the crow which threatened her employer, and for her employer's resurrection. This visionary self, which Baker constructed on the first day of her examinations, was finally made to conform to witchcraft standards on "March 3. 1618. before Sr. George Manners, Knight, and Samuel Fleming Doctor of Divinity," when she confessed "that shee hath a Spirit which hath the shape of a white Dogge, which shee calleth her good Spirit" (*Wonderful Discoverie* E2). Although Baker tried to emphasize that this was a "good Spirit," the emergence of this confession on the third day of questioning seems to signify that Knight and Fleming were dissatisfied with her confession until it featured a familiar, an element they could recognize and categorize, and one with which they could dismiss her power as evil.

Examinations were negotiations. In the right hands, fairies could easily morph into spirits and, from there, into familiars. Anne Baker, Joan Willimot, and Margaret and Phillip Flower all confessed to having familiars when they first attempted to provide an alternate explanation for their alleged powers. Baker ended up confessing that she had a spirit in order to account for her extra-sensory perception. In the tract's next investigation, Joan Willimot repackaged her original fairy; according to Purkiss, "Joan Willimot . . . muddled fairies and familiars, healing rites, and bewitchment in [her] deposition" (*Witch* 160-161):[46]

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[44] For more information on early modern critics attempted to sort out issues of oracular identity, see Katherine Hodgkin's "Visions, Witchcraft, and Madness in Early Modern England" (2001).

[45] The hand Baker sees signifies the condemnation of her employer, resonating with the mysterious hand writing on the wall seen by Belshazzar in the Book of Daniel. Daniel translates the message in part as "God has numbered thy kingdom, and finished it" and "thou art weighed in the balances and art found wanting" (Daniel 5:26-28). Fifteen years after Baker's examination, another suspected witch whose fame came through prophecy, Eleanor Davies, would adopt the image of a hand writing on a wall as the frontispiece illustration to *Given to the Elector* (1633).

> This Examinate saith, That shee hath a Spirit which shee calleth Pretty, which was given unto her by William Berry of Langholme in Rutlandshire, whom she served three yeares; and that her Master when hee gave it unto her, willed her to open her mouth, and hee would blow into her a Faerie which should doe her good; and that shee opened her mouth, and he did blow into her mouth;[47] and that presently after his blowing, there came out of her mouth a Spirit, which stood upon the ground in the shape and forme of a Woman.[48] (*Wonderful Discoverie* E4-E4r)

Willimot adds that she never used the spirit to hurt anyone; its weekly visits only provided her with information. Willimot would then respond by praying for the sick and needy. Witches like Baker and Willimot "deny *maleficium* not because they deny they keep spirits but because they see the nature of their spirits as good," a position which "erodes under questioning, until ... confessions in more traditional legal molds of witchcraft are made" (Gibson 27). Although Willimot may have seen her fairy Pretty as the extension of her own cunning-practice, an assistant informing her about the sick and how they fared post-treatment, but by the time Willimot was done confessing, Pretty had become proof enough of a demonic alliance to convict Willimot for witchcraft.

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[46] Because common belief held that most fairies already had names, when Willimot names her fairy, she renames it and calls it into being as something else.

[47] Medieval holy women would blow into the mouths of their visitors for good luck/health. Gifting the fairy this way seems to be a reversal of Eucharistic devotion; instead of opening her mouth to receive the body of Christ, Willimot opens her mouth to receive a spirit. Although Willimot is adamant that the spirit is helpful, by admitting that she promised it her soul, Willimot implicates herself in the confessional discourse designed to identify her as a witch.

[48] Few familiars appear in female form. They most often appear in the shape of animals; as humanoids and humans, they appear as strangely-dressed or -shaped males. The female form of Willimot's spirit/fairy alludes to how she saw it operating. Pretty also provides the best example of the possible influence of the Norse *fylgja*. She acts very much like an externalized soul; she has the same form as Willimot, pops out of her mouth, and checks up on her patients.

Not all fairy stories[49] end at the gallows, however. Anne Jefferies' fairy-tale, *An account of one Ann Jefferies,* written by Moses Pitt (1696), betrays the danger which, for women, accompanied the public admission of power.[50] Pitt was a participant in some of the narrative's events; Jeffries helped look after him when he was a child, and he remembered her as a young "girl of a poor and daring spirit; she would venture at those Difficulties and Dangers that no boy would attempt" (10). However, while knitting, Jefferies saw "six persons of small stature, all clothed in green[51] which she call'd fairies," and was evidently so frightened that she fell into a "Convulsion-fit" and was taken to bed. She recovered, only to fall into strange fits if anything bothered her (10-11).[52] At this moment in the text, Jefferies' narrative could be one of divine or demonic possession; she might be an ecstatic reprobate sinner or the victim of witchcraft. According to Pitt, once she was strong enough, Jefferies constantly went to church, and "took mighty Delight in Devotion and in Hearing the Word of God," a trait which expels her from the company of reprobate sinners, demoniacs, and witchcraft victims (12). Pitt's recollection that his mother did not trust Jefferies on her own in the home, for fear the girl might hurt herself through "some mischief by fire or set the house on fire" seems odd.[53] Jefferies' career as a healer, however, began that same day, when Pitt's mother locked her out of the house. Once out of Jefferies' sight, Pitt's mother fell and badly injured her leg. Jefferies, who claims that "half a dozen persons told her of" the accident, set about stroking her mistress' leg until it was healed.

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[49] Robert Kirk's *The Secret Common-wealth* (1893) allegedly written in 1691, provides a definition of fairies as "siths, or fairies, they call Sleagh Maith, or the Good People, it would seem, to prevent the Dint of their ill Attempts, (for the Irish use to bless all they fear Harme of; and are said to be of a midle Nature betuixt Man and Angel, as were Dæmons thought to be of old; of intelligent fluidious Spirits, and light changeable Bodies, (lyke those called Astral,) somewhat of the Nature of a condensed Cloud, and best seen in Twilight" (5). Christine Peters' *Women in Early Modern Britain* (1450-1640) investigate the colorations between malevolent faeries and familiars (2004) 124-131; Also see James A. Serpell "Guardian Spirits or Demonic Pets"(2002) 163-169); James Sharpe connects faeries to familiars, and familiars to the Devil in *Witchcraft in Early Modern England* (2001); Diane Purkiss looks at the faerie in the Scottish witch trial in *At the Bottom of the Garden* (2000) 85-115; Éva Pócs works with eastern European faeries in *Between the Living and the Dead* (1999) 88-91.For more information on faeries, see Diane Purkiss' "Sounds of Silence: Fairies and Incest in Scottish Witchcraft Stories" (2001). For more on faerie magic, see Éva Pócs' *Between the Living and the Dead* (1999), 149-158.

[50] In her seventies, and "prevailed with by some of her poor Ignorant Neighbors not to do it; and she fancying that if she should she might again fall into trouble about it," Jefferies was unwilling to relate her own tale (8). Five years previously, Pitt had written to his sister's son in Cornwall to get him to press Jefferies for details of her story; then too, she refused to divulge anything. Pitt's nephew relates, however, that his mother and grandmother recalled that Jefferies had been in Bodmin Gaol for three months, had gone without eating human food for six months, "and during her continuance in that Condition, several eminent cures were performed by her, the Particulars no one can now relate" (8). Dissatisfied with Jefferies' refusal and his sister and mother's hearsay, Pitt again wrote to his sister's husband, Mr. Humph. Martyn. He, in 1693, spent the greater part of a day pressuring Jeffries, but she sent back a detailed refusal: "she reply'd that if she should discover it to you, that you would make either book or ballads of it, and she would not have her name spread about the country in books or ballads of such things, if she might have five hundred pounds for doing so" (9). Jefferies obviously understood not only that someone would stand to make their own reputation by exploiting hers in print (according to the ESTC, Pitt had already published at least eleven times by 1696), but also that attention meant trouble. Jefferies insisted that she had been questioned before by "justices, at the sessions, and in Prison, and also before the Justices at the Assizes," and would be questioned again if her story were published (9). *An account of one Ann Jefferies,* then, is Pitt's narrative, not Jeffries', pieced together from what he could remember of the events of 1645. Despite the proliferation of her story through Robert West's *Popular Romances of the West of England,* Jefferies herself is loudly silent in this tract.

Jeffries' narrative shifts out of and among categories; it moves between fairy-tale,[54] cunning-magic, and mysticism. Though some details of their involvement remain unclear, Jeffries' fairies were clearly involved in the story's events; they affirmed that Jefferies was forced to leave the house against her will, and they promised that her mistress "should not fare the better for it" (16). Jefferies' oracular knowledge was given to her by these small people, as was her sudden ability to cure injuries. This kind of knowledge was inherently suspect, but, like most subjects of stories featuring the miraculous and monstrous, Jefferies became a local celebrity, curing all those who came to her and sustaining herself only on

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[51] These six persons could also have been leprechauns, rather than fairies.

[52] Jefferies had to have identified these small people as fairies later on; the chronology leaves no place for her to have provided specifics on these beings at the moment of seeing them, or during her original fits.

[53] The implications of this banishment are quite dark. Most spiritually performative women went through a period of attempting to hurt their own bodies, in punishment for some spiritual sin they felt they had committed. Because Jefferies' narrative begins with her fits, we have no spiritual context in which to locate this apparent self-destructive streak, but fire is often used in counter-magic, in addition to being an obvious symbol of hell.

[54] Encounters with the fairies in both England and Scotland are often problematic affairs. Fairies often have their own agendas, and any gifts they offer come with a price. For more details on fairy encounters, Diane Purkiss' *At the Bottom of the Garden* (2003) offers an excellent survey on how fairies function from early modern Europe until now. Beyond a reproduction of one woodcut from Robert West's *Popular Romances*, Purkiss is startlingly silent on Jeffries' famous English fairy encounter.

the food the fairies brought her.[55] When a constituency of Magistrates and Ministers came to persuade Jefferies (and the Pitts) that her fairies were "evil spirits" and "delusions of the Devil," she responded a day later with a Biblical passage, John 4:1: "believe not every spirit, but try spirits whether they are of God" (19-20). In her fairies, Jefferies found the authority to challenge religious and secular authorities, as well as to excuse herself from shared meals and chores. She was soon imprisoned, however, presumably for consulting with spirits, and watched to see if any would appear with her. Pitt recalls that she "lay in the Goal for a considerable time after; and after Justice Tragegal, who was her great persecutor, kept her for some time in his house as a Prisoner, and that without Victuals" (22). She kept up her work as a healer for some time after her imprisonment, but was not allowed to return to the Pitt's house; they shuffled her off to their closest living relative — Thomas Pitt's aunt.

What do we do with Anne Jefferies and six her green-clad persons of small stature? Jefferies signifies her double identity through many of the physical and linguistic tropes we have become accustomed to seeing in the divinely and demoniacally possessed. She is young, but at the same time, brave and willful; although illiterate, she displays both vehement piety and an extensive knowledge of the Bible. Her foray into the oracular is manifested physically, with a series of fits, and emotionally, with strange, demanding behavior which demands deference and excludes common labour. She stops eating human food like an ecstatic prophet, she predicts injuries like a witch, and she heals her visitors like a mystic or a cunning-woman. In addition to this, all of her information and power come from an exterior source. By combining elements from a range of existing categories, Jeffries' narrative seems to confound them all.

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[55] With the notable exceptions of one occasion when she sat with the family to eat a little roast beef, and another when the narrator saw her eating secretly in her room, Jefferies never ate in front of her employers. She ate her fairy food alone in her room and never spoke to her fairies in the presence of others (17). Medieval mystics, like Catherine of Siena, claimed to survive solely on the Eucharist; Jefferies may have confused fairy food with its Catholic equivalent.

What is clear in Jefferies' story, however, is that a secondary identity, as village psychic and healer, was added to her primary identity as willful servant girl, and this addition was made possible by her affiliation with the fairies. In Pitt's retelling of her story, Anne Jefferies' encounter with the fairies does not inherently change her nature or personality. Rather, it seems to give her the authority to instruct ministers to check their scripture and to instruct her employers to leave her alone.

Margaret Muschamp's story, related in *Wonderful News from the North* (1650), is unpleasant in many particulars. Nonetheless, it represents not only the fluidity of the categories of witch and prophet, fairy, familiar, and angel, but how these categories could function simultaneously. Driven by an urgent desire for proof of spiritual engagement, Muschamp's mother, father, family, and community were willing to surrender authority and disbelief in accordance with the whims of a little girl. Nothing was too weird for these people; there was clearly play in the boundaries. Margaret Muschamp's[56] fleeting encounter with fame began like Anne Jefferies' and is not unlike that of an ecstatic prophet, demoniac, or victim of witchcraft. In "Invasions" (1998), Diane Purkiss reads Muschamp's "dynamic and flexible performance" as containing elements of all three (236). Muschamp's spiritual turmoil grows worse the longer she suffers: she begins by falling into an ecstatic fit, her ecstasy turns into torments, her torment becomes attacks. Purkiss claims that

> privately, to be 'tormented[57] may have meant achieving at last a perfection – psychic, bodily, spiritual – which the godly child must always seek but never complacently discover in herself, a perfection that could never be acknowledged or reflected by the parents, but only by an outside agency

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[56] Diane Purkiss notes that, despite its claim to have a single author, Mary Moore, *Wonderful News from the North* (1650) is an "assemblage of stories from many sources" including a previous pamphlet, depositions, and a trial indictment (236).
[57] Purkiss notes that the Moore uses a rhetoric of torments to align Muschamp with "martyrs for the true faith . . . making her into a spectacle and hence a witness to the truth of the godly cause" (237, 238).

> – angels, ministers of grace. Paradoxically, by being tormented and broken, Margaret becomes whole. (238)

Muschamp's torments, like a baptism of fire, make her worthy to assume a prophetic position, a worthiness that the angels finally notice. During one of her attacks, she sees her "good things (for so she called them) in the likeness of a Dove and a Partridge," which are understood to be the angels she saw while in ecstasy, and she accuses John Hutton and Dorothy Swinnow of witchcraft (6). The narrator reports that for "two hours together [Muschamp] continued in heavenly religious Discourse with these angels," rapturously rejoicing that she had Hutton's blood and promising that more of his blood would save her bewitched brother.

Muschamp was not alone in accusing people in her community of bewitching her, nor were her pantomime battles with invisible foes unusual. Similar events can be found in many witchcraft trials involving children, as with the Lowestoft and Lancaster trials. She was unique, however, in believing that angels were "always appearing to her, banishing the Witches she apprehended; [Muschamp] would cry out and relate to her Angels how she, by the two Witches, had been tormented" (11). She reported having appointments with the angels, who appeared to her "like birds, as big as Turkies, and faces like Christians"; they would fly in and consult with her about the future when she would sit in the garden alone (12). Over time, she saw her angels more often; they formed invisible troupes which rallied behind her and offered her information. Everything else in her reports became compounded as well; the two original angels became legions of fluttering, singing, sweet-faced turkeys, and Swinow suddenly had two witches at her back. Before abandoning Muschamp for twelve weeks, the angels promised that, if the "Justices, and Judges at the Assize would not doe justice, her own angels . . . would visibly, to the admiration of all the beholders, appear like a man and woman, and justify the truth, if the wretched had not feared them away" (12). This is both a threat and a promise; if the law did not fulfill its duty, God would be forced to step in and prove that Muschamp was right and righteous.

Purkiss suggests that "the seething fury inside the godly child was offered virtually no other legitimate vent except the ungodly" (242). The narrator of *Wonderful News from the North,* as well as Muschamp herself, seems to be attempting to prove that Muschamp's blood-lust was not her own, but rather her response to the angels' demands. From the safety of her prophetic position, Muschamp could claim that the angels were the ones seeking Swinnow's blood—not she. The angels are constructed as extensions of her identity; like the familiars who act out the witch's malefic desires, the angels are manifestations of her desire for attention, power, and vengeance. Fueled by this mutually beneficial relationship, Muschamp successfully builds her original ecstasy into victimization, and then into authority. She provides an intriguing example of a girl whose identity was predicated on her connection to angels *and* demons. She saw herself as a visionary who, armed with the protection of her angels, had to fight off the animal familiars sent by witches to destroy her family. Her story does not, however, offer a conventional, linear performance of this spiritual position; rather, her identity, dependent on her relationship with both angels and witches, evolves in response to external forces.

Margaret Muschamp believed she had not committed any sin or unneighborly action; like the girls featured in the Throckmorton and Lowestoft cases, she did not even consider herself responsible for her own physical and emotional turmoil. Like many other girls involved in spiritual scandal, she looked around and chose to blame witches, instead. The relationships that spiritually touched women claimed with angels and demons, God and Satan, were as complicated and multivalent as those between witches and their familiars, and resembled them in important respects.

The Devil Made Them Do It: Growling Girls and Ecstatic Reprobates

A woman did not have to claim oracular power to perform as a spiritually significant player.[58] Any woman who displayed unusual spiritual energy triggered both interest and anxiety; when she spoke, people came to hear. These women, the possessed person and the ecstatic reprobate, whose performance might muddle easy categorization, were, like their dark sisters, unable to claim the spiritual authority which flowed through them as their own. It belonged to another force, a second self.

The possessed and obsessed spoke with startling spiritual authority and manifested physical symptoms of their condition. In terms of a well-defined spiritual allegiance, these signs were equivocal. Joan Drake attempted to swallow pins, whereas the victim of witchcraft and demonic possession vomited them up; does this indicate a reversal of the malefic or a parallel to it? How would a contemporary, or even the possessed woman herself, know to which category she belonged?[59]

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[58] According to Brian Levack, there was a rise in alleged cases of possessing in the 1660, which dropped off and were rare by the 1680's. In "A Divine Apparition or Demonic Possession?" Moshe Sluhovsky looks at the case of Nicole Obry's to engender new readings of possession as both an involuntary interaction between the possessed and possessing agent, and an "initiator of the drama, a participant in the process of diagnosis, and of definition of the behavior as possession, or prognosis, and finally, of recovery" (256-257). Sluhovsky's interpretation of possession offers the possessed agency in their identity, performance, and recovery. Also see Stuart Clark's Chapter "Possession, Exorcism, and History," in *Thinking with Demons* (1997), 401-422. For an extensive study of possession behaviour in the Middle Ages, see Nancy Caciola's *Discerning Spirits* (2003). Éva Pócs looks at possession within an eastern European context in "Possession Phenomena, Possession-Systems" (2005) 84-151; H. Sidky's *Witchcraft, Lycanthropy, Drugs and Disease: An Anthroplogical Study of the European* (2004) looks at possession through disease and maleficium, 155-187; Philip C. Almond's *Demonic Possession and Exorcism in Early modern England* (2004) provides easy access to primary materials.

[59] Edward Jorden is known for his attempt to look at possession as disease called "suffocation of the mother," Edward Jorden claims that the primary symptoms of this disease are "difficulty of breathing" and "privitation of voyce and speech" (*Briefe Discourse* E3v). For more scientific looks at witchcraft, also see Gregory Durston *Witchcraft and WitchTrial* (2000)161-165; Frances E. Dolan's *Dangerous Familiars: Representations of Domestic Crime in England, 1550-1700.*(1994); Peter Elmer's "Medicine, Religion and the puritan revolution" (*The Medical Revolution of the Seventeenth-Century.* (1989) 10-45); Joseph Klaits' *Servants of Satan: The Age of the Witch Hunts.* (1985), 125-126; Alan McFarlane's *Witchcraft in Tudor and Stuart England* (1970) 178-185; and Garfield Tourney's "The Physician and Witchcraft in Restoration England," (*Med Hist.* 1972 April; 16(2): 143–155).

Most simply, the reprobate sinner saw herself as somehow responsible for her condition. In her study "Demonic Possession and Poetic Exorcism in Early Modern France," Susan K. Silver suggests that the performance of possession:

> functions as historical ventriloquism, since the voice of the demoniac, by definition, is not her own. The devil occupies her and speaks through her. For the demoniac, as de Certeau notes, following Rimbaud, *Je est un autre.* The self is essentially estranged, eclipsed, and displaced by the demonic occupant. The role of the early modern exorcist, inquisitor, or doctor was thus to return the subject's discourse to its proper place, restoring order and identity by effecting a cure. (24)

One can read, in a case of demonic possession, the demon as the subject, and the possessed as the object. This subject-object relationship illustrates the primary difference between the possessed and the obsessed: the ecstatic reprobate sinner and the prophet both maintain an iron grip on their role as *subject* of focus. Although God and the Devil might be the topic, neither prophet nor sinner was emptied of meaning, like the possessed—instead, *they* were always the central figures.

Ecstatic reprobates claimed their subject role by arrogating the knowledge of God's final judgment on their souls. England's spectacularly and emphatically self-loathing reprobates were suffering from what John Stachniewski calls "the conviction of being 'damn'd already ... an experience [that] the doctrine of reprobation had made possible" (41). The reprobate sinner's narrative was rife with great self-abasement and long, elaborate confessions, but it also demonstrated the ecstatic reprobate's absolute control over her final spiritual destiny; she had sinned enough to force God's grace to fail.[60] Besides those located in the witch's confessions and narratives, it is among the biographies and spiritual narratives of reprobate sinners that we find the most succinct expression of a spiritual shadow-self. For these women, their own dark inclinations, the death impulse, the desire to escape Christian discourse and practice, and the necessity of being the center of attention and concern were manifested, by transference, in Satan's hissing, cursing, and condemning commands.

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[60] Many thanks to the lovely and brilliant Susan Liepert for providing a survey of the theology of reprobation.

As the blackman represented, for Temperance Lloyd, her darkest and most inarticulate desires, Joan Drake's lengthy and ecstatic spiritual malaise represented her most unworthy and unspeakable self. *Trodden Down Strength* (1654) is a biography and a narrative of Drake's spiritual crisis and conversion, representing her as the unwitting victim of the Devil's snares. She began her downward path with what appears to have been postpartum depression: "fumes and scurvie vapors mounting up to her head" after the difficult birth of her daughter (10).[61] Over the course of one night, Drake saw herself as damned, assured of salvation by an angel, and again "damned without hope of mercy" (12-13). Like prophets who cited biblical passages in their prophecies, the Devil helped Drake find biblical references she could use to prove her own damnation. Although she indulged in ten years of self-focused loathing, an indulgence which would be unavailable to women who had to work for a living,[62] Drake attempted to take responsibility for her state as a reprobate sinner, claiming that she had "sinned the unpardonable sin against the holy Ghost" (41). This is, in itself, not an unusual claim for a reprobate sinner; what is worth noting, however, is that the narrative does not hold Drake responsible for her thoughts or actions. The narrator later admits that Drake "kept close the Devil's counsel, revealing the same unto none," only telling Mr. Dod "three years after" and granting him permission to publish her story so it might be useful to others (44). Drake seems to have been keenly aware of the public nature of her performance. She is so assertive with her claims of being damned that she seems to be asserting some kind of oracularity. This stance gave her relators the necessary cue, not only to force Drake to admit that she herself could not be privy to that information, but also to wring from her an acknowledgement it had come from an outside source. Since God plainly would not speak to her thus, they reasoned, the voice in her head was the Devil whispering to her. Drake's identity was doubled as her accusers reconstructed it; she was forced to admit that she was not oracular and had no privileged knowledge of God's judgment. However, she holds on to the notion, in the face of her accusers, that even if she was deceived it was in God's hands to save her. Despite the best efforts of those who tried to reason with her, Drake held on to her damnation with an iron grip; they could reason away her oracularity, but they could not take away her self-loathing. Unable to convince Drake of the inauthenticity of her own emotions, Dod and the other relators had to conclude that Satan continued to be the invisible force behind the stubbornly unsaved Drake.

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[61] Although Joyce Dovey seems to be reading herself as the worst kind of reprobate sinner, as previously discussed in Chapter Two, her torments were defined as demonic by the Chaplain and Captain who saw her. Her performance changed based on the demands of those around her; they needed a woman without subjectivity, and she complied. Dovey had "formerly little taken notice of Religion, until about 4 years since, who after hearing of a Sermon, seemed to be much wrought upon and dejected, who afterwards fell into some passion, and (as was conceived by her friends) Convulsion fits, which in time grown stronger upon her, and observed especially to take her in time of private prayer, or *performance* of pious duties" (1). Dovey knew there was something really wrong with her when she could no longer do what a godly woman should; she believed she must therefore be irreligious, profane, and vile. Shortly thereafter, Dovey was entirely defined by her relationship with the Devil.

[62] Drake admits that the weight of her sin was "quite unhooking her from all manner of duties" (45).

By the 1680s, the prophet and the witch as spiritually significant players had all but disappeared from political protests and the court room. However, the anxieties which split ecstatic reprobates into sufferer and spiritual second self remained. Drake was not alone in self-loathing, but her attempts at self-destruction were superseded by Hannah Allen's. Having started their ecstatic self-loathing at approximately the same time, four decades later Hannah Allen still spoke in the language of spiritual despair. Allen represents the tail end of the epidemic of spiritual despair in early modern England. Hers was as menacing and vampiric as a familiar; it cost her the ability to mother her own children, to travel past religious iconography, and to function as a productive member of society. Her second self, the voice which made her hurt herself, was not, however, a ferret sucking from her cheek, a green man helping her heal, or an angel with a face like a turkey.

Rather, the part of Allen who hated and wept was Satan himself.[63] In her autobiography, *A Narrative of God's Gracious Dealings* (1683), she recalled being sent away, at the age of twelve, to live with her aunt in London; here, her teenage angst was manifest in the form of the Devil, who "cast horrible blasphemous thoughts and injections into [her] mind" (3).[64] On the very next page, and, one assumes, in the same year of her life, Allen has already been "persuaded that [she] had sinned the Unpardonable Sin" (4).[65] Thinking her husband had died at sea, she was in conflict with Satan for years, plagued by temptations "to impatience and dispair; to close with the Devil and forsake [her] God" (15). This battle defined Allen socially, physically, emotionally, and spiritually. She could not see herself outside of this black melancholia, and feared that she had or would pass her sins onto her son, like an unwelcome *fylgjur* or familiar who would damn him with her presence as she was damned. She begged her aunt to raise her son strictly, because "if that were possible, he might be saved, though he had such a mother" (24). Allen also blamed her various dramatic, but ultimately half-hearted, suicide attempts on the Devil. She attempted to smoke opium,[66] but once her maid secured some for her, it was taken away[67]; she tried to smoke spiders[68] to kill herself, instead (33). Allen notes that the Devil found her a place to hide in the attic, where she could starve herself to death. There she laid a long black scarf over herself like a funeral shroud, and stayed until she became cold and hungry and called for help. This external force, her second self, which she identifies as Satan, was the reason anyone paid attention to her suffering at all.

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[63] The medical establishment of the time increasingly treated the divinely and demonically possessed as hysterics. Moreover, the contemporary legal apparatus dismissed witchcraft accusations with increased cynicism. These phenomena corresponded with a final surge of published spiritual accounts.

[64] Although her narrative was published in 1683, Allen began her life's pursuit of despair in 1650, around the same time as Joan Drake, and four years before *Trodden Down Strength* was published.

[65] What sin that might be for a twelve-year-old girl remains unspoken; well within the discourse of sin and blasphemy, Allen evidently still believed in God. One wonders if it were at this moment that she was certain she had inadvertently renounced Him.

[66] It is tempting to think not only that Allen enjoyed these forays into forbidden behavior, but that perhaps she was already acquainted with opium; the severe anxiety she suffers from could be a by product of opium withdrawal.

[67] The shopkeeper taking away Allen's opium after she had already paid for it is a curious addendum—perhaps the maid smoked it?

[68] Curiously, "spider blue" is a slang term for heroin, a derivative of opium. Allen mentions her attempt to kill herself with spiders later in the text (44).

Hannah Allen's self-identification as a reprobate sinner, from the time she was twelve and had her first naughty, belligerent thought about God, until the time she met her second husband, the godly widower Charles Hatt, was based on the omnipresence of the Devil, tempting her to sin: blaspheme, attempt suicide, shun church and doctrine. All the things Allen felt but could not admit to were transferred onto the Devil; she was who she was only in reference to the Devil's role in her life. Without her pain and ecstatic self-loathing, Allen had no identity at all.

Women who moved through the permeable membranes of early modern English spirituality did so at significant personal risk. To claim any kind of supernatural authority was inherently dangerous. Whether their identities were extended to include familiars, fairies, spirits, demons, or the Devil himself, any time a woman claimed more power than her peers, her authority was seen as suspect. Although seventeenth-century England was fascinated by the monstrous and the miraculous, the populace did not believe that the calloused hands of servants and housewives held the power to change the world around them. To be defined at all was to be defined in terms of another force.

Prophets and Their Second Selves

Prophets came the closest to having acceptable authority and foreknowledge. Because they represented themselves as being in close, intimate conversation with God, their words were as much vested with his authority as the witch's power was with Satan's. However, the prophet's identity extended beyond her role as God's handmaid, and was significantly more problematic. Prophets engaged with a spiritual self, an angel who showed them their visions, or with their God, their partner in prophecy. The prophetic self was an extension of the prophet's identity; the visions she saw through this other half were manifestations of her own concerns. In the same way a woman becomes a witch when she is joined with her familiar, a woman becomes a prophet when her identity is doubled to include a spiritual second self. This prophetic self offered the woman an alternative to becoming an empty vessel filled with God's energy and his words; her identity could be extended, rather than negated, into a doubled understanding -- a self which could momentarily slip its mortal frame and join with a power beyond itself.

Discussions of the prophetic self, like those of the witch's familiar, seem to threaten that alignment, dividing the woman from her prophecy even more than if one merely called her a trumpet or, as Hilary Hinds does, an author figure (12). However, because seventeenth-century English society refused to see the woman as a witch without her familiar and a demonic alliance, it is proper to see the prophet as defined by a prophetic other half and her Godly communications. The prophetic self is not the voice of God, but the voice of the woman, newly invested with an authority which saw fit to warn, judge, and condemn early modern England for its sins.

The Devil manifests the prophet's shadow as much as the witch's. Although the Devil was a real, tangible presence to many in early modern England, for the ecstatic prophet, like the witch, the Devil's actions had an immediate effect on their lives. Although it might logically follow that the Devil had opposite roles for witch and prophet, working with the witch and against the prophet, both women had a more complicated relationship with him. Although the witch was identified by her affiliation with the Devil, her relationship with his minions, and her role as one of his servants, the witch herself often represented that relationship as unwelcome, negative, or, at best, not very profitable. Numerous ecstatic prophets, like their demoniac sisters, were likewise defined by their relationship with the Devil; their authority came not from joining the legion, but triumphing over it. In their retrospective glances, the ecstatic prophet and demoniac both blame Satan for the thoughts and actions which are too dark to claim as their own; he is their shadow self.

The sharp contrast between the emaciated, prone body of long-suffering Sarah Wight and the strength and vigour of her prophetic voice illustrates the obvious divide between the two halves of the prophet. *The Exceeding Riches of Grace*, published in 1647 (three years before *Wonderful News from the North*), deals with the same kind of mother/ daughter tensions, ecstatic prophecy, and spiritual battles, but where Muschamp saw Satan as operating through witches, Wight saw Satan coming after her himself. Henry Jessey, the editor of her spiritual narrative, writes that Wight was grievously tempted and troubled. Satan, "having but a short time so to tempt and torment her," attacked her, encouraging her to destroy her body and her soul (10). God, however, "wonderfully prevented her destruction, many wayes," and the battle continued (8). After having her prophecies interrupted by her mother, Wight "started suddenly, [and] she said: The Devil fights with me as he did with Michael, and his Angels. Doe you not see him? Doe you not see him? (and she struck with the back of her hand from her)" (19). Wight's sudden exclamation reads like the tormented wailing of a victim of *maleficium*. She strikes out as if the Devil had moved to strike her. Wight obviously sees herself at the epicenter of a spiritual battle. When Satan tempted her to self-destruct, he was physically attacking her; in resisting, she was akin to Michael, and became an angelic warrior. Wight's prophetic stance is built on the bedrock of her previous sin; only from having been in darkness can she fight alongside the light.

Wight's prophetic messages seem like a series of rhetorical questions, or a philosophical dialogue, but the rapid, self-contained dialectic points to a conversation with herself. Wight's prophetic performance was differentiated from her trembling self-doubt and self-loathing; she proclaimed to her maid, Anne Gay, "I am a Reprobate, a Castaway, I never had a good thought in all my life" (19), but her identity would soon shift from sinner to prophet. Although her relators emphasized the shift between the shaky, suicidal Wight and the low, authoritative voice of God, Wight is not an empty vessel God speaks through. Rather, her ecstatic prophetic moments are filled with conversations between Wight the girl and Wight the prophet. She implores, "Come Lord Jesus; Come Lord Jesus," and answers herself "But why say I, Come? He is come, he is come" (19). Again and again, she answers or echoes herself: "Now I have my desire; I desired nothing but a crucified Christ, and I have him" (22). She speaks to a "we" and an "us," which would seem to imply that she is speaking to an audience of interested bystanders, but Wight actually became livid when someone answered her in her ecstatic state. When her mother "had moved to take somewhat, laying her hand upon hers," Wight angrily retorted, "Why do you hinder my communication with God? And remained troubled, sighing about it for sometime after" (19). The "we" signifies her audience of sinners, but moreover, it signifies her conversation with herself. The two aspects of Wight, girl and prophet, debate with one another and it is from this dialectic that God's message emerges.

While Sarah Wight spoke to her prophetic self, Anna Trapnel saw hers. There was not only flexibility in her performance of prophetic behaviour (Trapnel travels to Whitehall before collapsing and prophesying, while Wight stays home to do the same), but flexibility in her understanding of herself as prophet. While claiming to be a worm, Trapnel, the prophet, was God's rock star. Not only was she a prophet in action, she often conversed with God as one would with a friend by one's side; she actually saw her prophetic self embodied in visions. Although she was inspired to read certain Biblical passages, and passively received prophetic visions outside of any kind of prophetic context, Trapnel also chatted with God on her own. Finding herself in a funk one day, she asked God "what was the matter"; God responded "I let thee see what thou art in thy self to keep thee humble, I am about to shew thee great things and visions which thou hast been Ignorant of" (*Cry* A2v). Their conversation was as direct as it was frank. Trapnel was not being effaced by God, or filled by him; rather, she was empowered to see herself within herself. The visionary experience was not based on a relinquishment of self to the divine; rather, it was founded on inward discovery, which God facilitated and accompanied. Like someone looking into a series of mirrors, Trapnel saw her prophetic self, her other half, within her vision. As a prophet, Trapnel was neither emptied nor filled; rather, she was drawn into an image of herself, and became herself fully when she became a prophet:

> So I remained praying, keeping many fasting days in my Chamber, till six weeks before Dunbar fight; and then I had Visions given me concerning that first overthrow of the Scots, where I saw my self in the fields, and beheld our Army, and their General, and hearing this Voice, saying, Behold Gideon and the lapping ones with him! (A3v)

Trapnel also had agency within her own visions. In her vision of a great oak, although she does not explicitly say that she saw herself looking at the tree, the vision she describes did not hover and shimmer in front of her; rather, she looked around within it, gazing down at the roots, and seeming to cock her head to listen to God. God did not need to explain his prophecy, his vision to Trapnel; rather, the voice inside her head seems to have been helping her sort out her own vision. Later, recounting one of her visions of Cromwell, she said, "he ran at me, and as he was neer with his horn to my breast, an arm and an hand clasped me round, a Voyce said, I will be thy safety" (B3).[69] Trapnel is enough inside her own vision to feel Cromwell's horn at her breast before she breaks away from her prophetic self and "[sings] praise" (B3). The prophetic second self, like a familiar, clearly has a body as well as a spirit.

Again and again, Trapnel speaks to the conflicting tensions between testifying and blaspheming, between Satan's temptations and God's consolations, and between the exteriority of her body and the interiority of her prophetic self. There is a necessary duality in her prophetic mode. Satan provides an ongoing villain, trying to tempt her from her godly behaviour, and God keeps her humble. She reports being drawn into her visions, pulled inward while her prophetic self draws strength from her exterior self. Even if she sings about visions facilitated by God, the voice which rings out is her own.

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[69] The metaphor is intriguingly sexual when read in terms of the witch's sexualized relationship with her familiars and, by proxy, Satan himself.

Sarah Wight and Anna Trapnel had the ear of God, interpreting his concerns, and acting as his mouthpiece. They facilitated the challenges of these roles not by absenting themselves, but by doubling themselves. There were two Wights and two Trapnels: the women and the prophets. As in Aristophanes' vision, these prophets were made strong and proud by their completeness, and eventually were split, leaving the women smaller, mute, and eventually invisible to history.

Me, Myself, and It

In their fight to establish their own identities, witches and prophets doubled themselves: the witch by her familiar, the prophet by her prophetic self, and the divine and demoniacally possessed by their spiritual Saviour or tormentor. Although studying these second selves might appear to move us away from the women, towards an investigation of tangential details, understanding these spiritual second selves is crucial to understanding how normal women became startlingly powerful spiritual players. The women were not transcendental, and their power was not a birthright. It was the seventeenth-century equivalent to work benefits: the magic came with the job. When a woman became a prophet, she earned the right to prophesy; when a woman became a witch, performing *maleficium* or miracles was likewise part of the job description.

In order to accommodate unearthly power, women expanded their subjectivities to include another self, on whom responsibility and rights could be placed. Witches and prophets may have used this doubling to attempt to comprehend their enigmatic power, but this doubling was also born of necessity. From the outside, the presence of familiars enabled easier accusations—few witnesses reported seeing witches performing *maleficium*, but many relate seeing strange animal phenomena. The familiar became an easy, catch-all way to explain how witches operated without being seen anywhere near the scene. The familiar might be the active agent, but it was believed to be in intimate contact with, or acting on the behest of, the witch. If it is difficult for modern readers to approach the familiar without incredulity, it was equally difficult for most contemporary accusers, examiners, judges, and writers to approach it without a bias towards belief.

Women often admitted to keeping familiars under the pressure of extreme and unrelenting examinations, at a time when admitting to having a familiar was akin to admitting she was a witch. However, familiars provided some benefit for the witches associated with them. They gave women a living, active agent with which to embody their darkest desires, justify their actions, or link to their supposed familial wickedness. Temperance Lloyd's statement that the blackman was diabolical, Joan Prentice's claims that Bidd was disobedient, and Joan Upney's emphasis on how lame and wilting her imps were, were all strategies which moved focus and culpability onto their familiars. Although blaming their familiars for making them into witches, contravening their authority, or working as independent agents did not save women from the noose, it did give them latitude within which they could compose their last narrative.

The prophetic second self offers us a mirror view: it links prophets to the seat of their authority and proves God's active interest in the world. As Sarah Wight experienced, in some cases, Christ acted as a prophetic counter-part, a *paraclete* who linked her with the divine and authorizes her to prophesy. If the messages are God's, Christ is the prophetic facilitator. The prophetic second self is also the vision the prophet has of herself. This is how the prophet negotiates the apparent vacating of self believed necessary to the accommodation of God's voice within her. Anna Trapnel explains this best when she recounts seeing herself in a vision; she recognizes her two selves, the prophet having the vision, and the one in it. The prophet explains her vision as coming from God, but her second self, the one she sees communing with God, embodies her relationship to the act of creating prophecy. On some intrinsic level, the woman knows, when she prophesies, that it is not her ordinary mundane self doing so. In seeing herself expanded, she finds a way to understand this new subjectivity, and her worthiness to speak with God.

Spiritual communion was not limited to the witch and the prophet, however. The Devil played in the bodies of the demoniacs and in the ears of the ecstatic reprobates. These women defined themselves by their torments and, in many cases, by their tormentor. Visionary women also saw spirits, angels, fairies, and demons. By investigating these cases, we can envision how spiritual subjectivities were necessarily collaborative and interpretive. Joan Willimot's spirit could easily have been read as a fairy if she had not been pressured to confess to a demonic pact. Margaret Muschamp's bloodthirsty angels could have been demons or familiars, and Hannah Allen and Joan Drake's encounters with the Devil could have proved that they were witches, or alternately, served as stepping stones on the way to prophecy. It is with these anomalous cases that the arbitrary nature of prophetic and malefic identities comes into sharp relief. John Hale's fear of prophetic witches meant that almost any prophet could be read as a witch. His suspicions illustrate how desperately close witches were to demoniacs, demoniacs to reprobate sinners, and reprobate sinners to ecstatic prophets. Although this may suggest only continuum where there was once a dichotomy, the categories are at least permeable, if not entirely collapsible. When it came to spirituality, the player needed not only a second self, but a sympathetic audience who would correctly review her language, body, and co-stars.

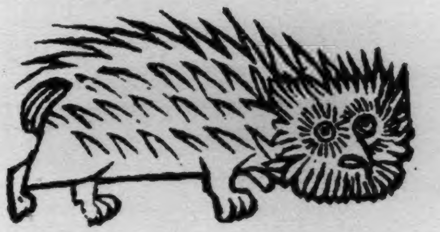

Figure 20: Elizabeth Francis' "little rugged dog" from A Detection of Damnable Driftes *(1579)*

It Takes a Village: Identity through Community

> *Madam, Why do you use me thus? I never did you any harm as yet.* (74)
>
> Mother Alice Samuel, The most strange and admirable discouerie of the three witches of Warboys (1593)

Witches and prophets were identified through local community recognition of their spiritual and demonic powers. Witch and prophet were titles, designations, mantles of office that women wore only if other people saw them as spiritually significant. The witch and prophet's identities could not be established and their power would not be validated without sometimes unwelcome community support. Their spheres of notoriety and influence could likewise grow, concentrically expanding, only if their immediate peers continued to legitimize their positions. In order to understand how the witch and prophet came to have the reputation and following they did, we need to understand how their communities saw them and how they established a circle of believers. The following chapter will pursue this understanding using case studies, since these provide the most expansive lens through which to look at the communities which created these dark sisters in their midst.

Black Sheep

Witches had to be authenticated by their peers before their local social, political, or legal apparatuses would consider them suspect enough to process. Although these women, albeit sometimes marginally, played a role in the community (usually as laborers), they became witches when they threatened that community in some appreciable way. The groundswell of accusations originated from three interrelated sources: from beneath, (from children or servants), peer to peer (cross-pollinating accusations), and from above (with professionals or educated busybodies). Although those who escaped accusations might try to save their neighbors, hysteria just as often swept communities into frenzy. When accusations came from the lowest members of the community, the accuser might be child (a relative or a neighbor) or servant (working for the victim's family). Alan MacFarlane's assertion that wealthier villagers generally accused poorer ones (110-113) must be qualified by the recognition that the accusations frequently began with the servants. These front-line representatives had the most involvement with the suspected witches and a strike against them was a strike against their employer's family and resources. Accusations also came from peers; women accused one another. The witch might blame her mother, sister, or neighbor for making her into a witch. The community ended up having two witches for the effort of finding one. These legal witnesses, Peter Elmer notes, "were more than just passive puppets of the state administration; they were storytellers, and their story telling had a kind of power"; their articulation of local sentiments influenced judges and juries, who, surprisingly or not, listened intently to the inside scoop provided by the pre-trial and in-court testimonies (56).[1] Although numerous people might stand up and testify on her behalf, no amount of familiarity or positive activity could convince the entire community of a woman's innocence once she was recognized as a witch. Finally, accusations came from the highest members of the community. When wealthy citizens and gentry became embroiled in accusatory fervor, they could bring in back-up in the form of an educated busybody or professional witch finder. This external professional could attest to having the knowledge necessary to find witches, would ask the right questions and start the community pointing its fingers. The witch hunter accused women and often entire communities of witchcraft. Witch hunts created witches wherever they went. Peter Ruston suggests that victims "might diagnose or suggest witchcraft, but were not freely allowed to make accusations until the community agree; then they became a diving rod, and the community the approving watchers of successful detection and accusation," (29). All three layers of accusers – children and servants, peers, and social superiors - could point and shout witch, but it took a community to throw the mantle of witch onto a woman's identity.[2] The multifaceted nature of the genesis of the witchcraft accusation not only complicates Thomas and Macfarlane's 'charity-refused' model (110-113), but also illustrates on how many fronts women may have found themselves vulnerable.

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[1] For more information on the creation of cross-accusations, see Peter Elmer's "Witches and Witnesses in New and Old England" (2001), 55-80.

Angels of the House

Just as community accusations of witchcraft could occur in several different configurations, community recognition and validation of prophets could take several forms. The prophet could see herself and her works as prophetic once her family and a group of interested onlookers authenticated her prophetic stance with their hushed and anticipatory presence. They testified that she was a prophet, therefore she was. Sarah Wight and Anna Trapnel established a supportive group of witnesses and notable citizens, including even other (potential) prophets sympathetic to their position and message. For Wight this recognition began at home—her mother was her most fervent and (ironically) effaced believer. Trapnel looked back in time for her family recognition, tracing her prophetic destiny to her mother's cry of "Lord! Double thy spirit upon my child," words she "uttered with much eagerness three times, and spoke no more" (*Cry* A2). Trapnel also published her prophecies with the names of her witnesses appended at the end; her circle was a synergistic part of prophetic production (Av). Likewise, if George Fox conceived of Quakerism, the widespread recognition of Margaret Fell as its spiritual mother solidified her position as the driving force behind the sect's organizational strength and her own spiritual specialness.

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[2] In "The End of Witch Trials," Brian Levack argues that, since the common folk had the ability to create and "sustain the mood of large witch-hunts," they also had the "capacity to bring witch-hunts to an end whenever they realized the trials were doing more harm than good" (374). Although an in-depth investigation of the causes behind the end of witch hunts is outside the scope of this study, I suggest in my Introduction that the prophet took over for the witch, filling the need to see God's presence in the world that the witch had originally satisfied. The prophet's position was validated by her peers just as validation for the witch's role ceased. For more information on the end of the witch hunts, see *The Witchcraft Reader* (2001) ed. Darren Oldridge, esp. Levack 373-386 and Owen Davies' "Urbanization and the Decline of Witchcraft." Davies' study of London might help locate the urban prophet as articulating the cultural anxieties previously embodied by the witch (399-412). Also see Keith Thomas' *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (1971) for the argument that materialists "jettisoned demons from the natural world," a view shared by the Muggletonians and Ranters (571), and that the prevalence of exposed frauds brought about critical skepticism (570-583).

Witnesses were not the prophet's only community; most published prophets were affiliated with a religious sect which provided a built-in support system for would-be prophets. Seventeenth-century English society and politics looked askance at the sudden and remarkable presence and propagation of religious sects. The Baptists, Fifth Monarchists, Levellers, Puritans, and Quakers had fluid memberships and particular religious, social, and political agendas.[3] It was possible for woman to try on a number of different spiritual communities. Where, when, why, and how they prophesied depended on who they prophesied with. Although the Levellers were not fighting for universal suffrage, Katherine Chidley and Elizabeth Lilburne found their voices among them. Mrs. Attaway spoke despite Baptists' non-committal attitude to women preachers. Speaking from her bed, Sarah Wight was a perfect Puritan prophet and the Fifth Monarchists supported Anna Trapnel's speaking and traveling. Katherine Evans and Sarah Cheevers believed that their messages were meant for a larger audience, and in the very proscribed way of the Society of Friends, followed their hearts and inner light, leaving family and home to proselytize.

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[3] For more information of the writing of sectarians, see Sharon Achinstein "Romance of the Spirit: Female Sexuality and Religious Desire in Early Modern England" (2002), Stevie Davies, *Unbridled Spirits* (1998). Hilda Smith, "Introduction: Women, Intellect, and Politics: their intersection in seventeenth-century England" Women Writers and the Early Modern British Political Tradition (1998), Lois Schworer, "Women's Public Political Voice in England: 1640-1740" (1997), Hillary Hinds, *God's Englishwomen* (1996), Nigel Smith, *Literature and Revolution In England* (1994), Rosemary Foxton 'Hear the word of the Lord': A Critical and Bibliographical Study of Quaker Women's Writing, 1650-1700. (1994), Phyllis Mack *Visionary Women: Ecstatic Prophecy in Seventeenth-Century England* (1992). Christine Berg and Phillip Berry "'Spiritual Whoredom': An Essay on Female Prophets in the Seventeenth Century" (1981).

Spiritual communities did not always provide women safe harbor, however. Quakers were persecuted for their beliefs and likewise rejected those who did not share them, or refused to toe the party line. Prophets like Mary Howgill, Ann Austin, and Martha Simmonds defined themselves because and in spite of their rejection. We need to understand what these different communities defined as 'proper' prophesying in order to understand the last piece of the prophetic puzzle. According to Sethe in Toni Morrison's *Beloved,* "definitions belonged to the definers—not the defined"; the witch and prophet are in every sense defined by those who name them (190). There is always someone looking at these women, interpreting their words and bodies. Those who define the witch and prophet even look outside the women themselves for the entity which supplies the magic for the *maleficium* and the miracle. Women could still see and construct themselves within the blinding interpretive glare; however, to know the witch and prophet, one must know the first and final voices that put them there.

Grassroots Witchcraft

No single scheme can illustrate what community life was in late sixteenth- and mid-seventeenth-century England, and in turn, what prompted witchcraft accusations; after all, as Peter Elmer notes, "the tensions which produced witchcraft accusations were, after all, omnipresent in English society" before, during and after the witch hunts (103). The size, economic prosperity, population density, and local environment of early modern English communities varied widely. In *Instruments of Darkness,* James Sharpe argues that there were about "10,000 parishes in England, most of them rural, which makes it impossible to be unequivocal about [their quality of life or] their variety" (34). However, some overarching trends helped define English village life during this period. England's population doubled between 1530 and 1630, the cost of food rose, and "purchasing capacity [declined to] less than half of what it was" by the 1650 (35). By the mid-seventeenth-century, most of England had a "mass of very poor people" who "accentuated pre-existing social stratification" (35). There were also numerous tensions between more and less economically sound villages and neighbors,[4] providing an obvious and well-trodden path for witchcraft accusations to follow.

Social dynamics within the early modern English village were complex, intertwined, public affairs. Keith Thomas writes that "rural society lacked much of the concept of privacy and private life," and was without apparatuses which would offer a "challenge to the view that a man's most personal affairs were the legitimate concern of the whole community" (527). In a social space where everyone's business was up for debate, interpersonal tensions, unresolved anger and inexplicable occurrences fueled the fire of witch-suspicion. Deborah Willis argues that "the English village could be a highly fractious place. While neighborly co-operation made mutual survival possible, neighborly disagreements of many sorts and competition over everything . . . provoked insults, quarrels, brawls, lawsuits and hurt feelings" which could nourish the soil of the germinating accusation (40). Peter Elmer argues that this soil was loosened by the "intense religions and political polarization in the years immediately prior to the [witch] trials. They were consequently fertile ground for witch-cleansing as a prelude to the re-creation of a new godly order in the region, based on evangelical Puritan reform" (109).

Although witchcraft accusations were not the only redress for perceived slights or damages, Keith Thomas lists prayer, cursing, arson, property damage, and counter-magic as options employed by those seeking revenge or recompense; these demonstrate a desire to get real, tangible retribution against perceived harm. Whatever its economic status, the village was a "face-to-face society, a social microcosm where people knew each other in a multiplicity of roles and where people took an interest in each other's business, a milieu where the 'symbolic credit' of reputation was, in most everyday transactions, as important as financial standing" (Sharpe 45). The number of ways people knew each other led to the multiple levels of buy-in and testimony surrounding witchcraft accusations; the more people who could chime in with their support, the stronger the case against the witch was.

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[4] Sharpe notes that "MacFarlane's findings that the characteristic pattern behind witchcraft accusations was for richer villagers to accuse poorer ones" (37). Economically, accusations might seem to strike from the top down, but the details of the witchcraft accusation illustrate how entire networks of opinion needed to operate before an accusation was taken seriously enough to go to trial. In fact, Sharpe argues that in a "surprising number of instances, indeed it seems that people accused of witchcraft were able to mobilize considerable support within their communities," and therefore, "a successful witchcraft accusation was not a forgone conclusion and . . . local enmities, friendship groupings and faction might work as effectively against the accuser as against the witch" (45, 48).

Popularized by MacFarlane, the 'charity-refused' paradigm is still used to explain the genesis of witchcraft accusations; Willis employs it in *Malevolent Nurture,* and Diane Purkiss, in *The Witch in History,* explores it among other approaches. In *Witchcraft and Witchcraft Trials,* Gregory Durston writes that "most prosecuted witches were unfortunate individuals, mainly older women, who had the misfortune to be unpopular amongst, and to be perceived as malign by, their immediate neighbors (205). The "traditional type of witchcraft fodder," he explains, is women who had been suspect for years (*ibid.*). The 'charity-refused' model, however, ignores too many anomalous cases to deserve this kind of broad application. Here, we can turn to Stuart Clark's *Thinking with Demons,* which reasons simply that women were accused of witchcraft "because they were witches," who aroused animosity "among their neighbors and kin" (110). Joan Cony, for example, was accused by her grandson, and accused her own daughter in turn. Jane Throckmorton made an apparently random accusation against Mother Samuel, and Throckmorton's siblings and house staff soon followed up with accusations of their own. In Lowestoft, Amy Denny was accused by Deborah and Elizabeth Pacy, and the fervour soon swept up Rose Cullender in the same adolescent accusatory maelstrom. The Flower daughters were accused by numerous community members, but the suspicions surrounding them fell flat until Lord and Lady Manners became involved. And malevolent witch-hunter, Matthew Hopkins, accused everyone possible. The witch was constructed by the people around her, as much as she was by her language, body, and familiar. Her community found more than one way to prick a witch.

Child's Play

Like children today who might see monsters in the closet, or boogie-men under the bed, early English children, the smallest and weakest members of their communities, saw witches all around them. Children played a role in witchcraft cases "so frequently that even the learned noticed" (Purkiss, *Witch* 107). Children were victims of witches, and witnesses against them--sometimes both at once.[5] They testified passionately and convincingly, turning childish fears and nightmares into legal indictments. This is not to say that children were explicitly at war with their mothers; however, these indictments, later seen as unreliable and suspect, were considered actual evidence in early modern witchcraft cases. Lacking social influence and economic power, the witch and the child were locked together in a cycle of mutual victimization. Frances Dolan argues that "like petty traitors or infanticidal mothers, witches are culturally positioned both as victims of their social and economic conditions and as victimizing others, in this case those more socially and economically empowered than they" (171). For the witch (a victim of social and economic disparity) and the child she supposedly harmed (the physically weakest and most powerless member of the community), the victim became the victimizer.

The stories children told about witchcraft are less illustrations of hatred against their mothers, than manifestations of concern about food, safety, and shelter—issues crucial to their survival. Moreover, these stories articulate the pleasure these children took in being asked to tell a story, and in being raptly listened to. If, as Stuart Clark suggests, witchcraft is about inversion, and, as Louise Jackson argues, the witch is herself defined as "the opposite of good or godly woman (particularly in her roles of wife and mother), then the child's testimony against the adult (mother) seems to further reinforce that same inversion. It was only in malefic victimization that the child too could invert power dynamics. The witch, whose alleged relationship with the Devil had stripped her of any community privileges, was the one person who had even fewer rights than a child in an early modern English village.

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[5] There was a certain fascination with the role children played in witchcraft accusations; Louise Jackson argues that "the witch was a warning to women as to what would happen if they behaved in a way which could be counted as subversive" (357). Contemporary interest in children as accusers seems to reflect a kind of *Schadenfreude*: the pleasure of watching bad mothers get what is coming to them. However, this guilty pleasure was not enjoyed by the English alone. In "The Sociology of Jura Witchcraft" (2002), E. William Monter notes that, although children in this region of France were rarely condemned to death as witches, they entered the spotlight as victims of possession and might accuse their parents of witchcraft, reveling in "lurid tales about the Sabbats which their parents had forced them to attend" (90). In "Heartland of the Witchcraze" (2002), H.C. Erick Midelfort notes a parallel between the eventual decline of German witchcraft trials and the waning credibility of child-witnesses (117-118). The end of the Swedish witch-panic also owed much to the fact that several child-witnesses eventually rescinded their testimony (119); Robert Muchembled notes that, not only did thousands of children testify against their mothers in the "epidemic persecution of 1670 around Lake Siljan in Sweden," but the women who were spared "received a severe warning not to behave" like their fallen sisters. (143).

Most of *A True and Just Record* (1582) reveals how third parties named witches, their familiars, and their crimes; however, the geneses of at least four of its stories come from children. At eight years of age, Frebey Hunold testified that her mother had two imps like tiny horses. At nine years, Henrie Selly recounted how his mother's imps hurt his brother John's leg and toe, a story his six-year-old brother corroborated. Seven-year-old Annis Dowsing, daughter of Annis Herd, testified that her mother had a box of black birds and a box of tiny cow spirits. Thomas Rabbet, son of Ursely Kempe, was eight years old when, according to Brian Darcey, he claimed "hee hath seen his mother at times to give them beere to drinke, and of a white Lofe or Cake to eate, and saith that in the night time the said spirites will come to his mother, and sucke blood of her upon her armes and other places of her body" (A3v).[6] These fantastic stories betray unfettered childish imaginations; these whimsical, minute imps threaten only children. Their miniaturization implies juvenile collusion; the children appear to be reproducing each other's testimony in a kind of chatty mimetic shift which alters the familiars' appearance but keeps them tiny. In testifying that the imps were fed milk and cake and caused danger to naturally born children, the child witness is emblematizing her/his real concern for resources, attention, and safety. Their testimonies conjointly represent the wish fulfillment often seen with demoniacs and visionary women. In testifying that they had seen their mother's imps, these children were able to seize authority usually denied them: adults listened to them, they were freed from domestic responsibilities for the course of their examinations, and most importantly, they claimed power over their parents they would not otherwise have access to.

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[6] The rest of the accusations concerning familiars came from adults, those accused of witchcraft, or those who supposedly suffered from it. Ursely Kempe related a wealth of information about other women that she had gathered from her former familiar Tyffin (before Ales Newman took him away). Kempe testified seeing spirits peeking out from under cloths in pots at Elizabeth Bennet's and Ales Hunt's homes. Tyffin, she confessed, told her the spirits' names and what crimes they had committed at their mistresses' behest. Although he told her that Annys Glascock had indeed bewitched a child to death, Kempe did not ask him the name of Glascock's spirits. Building on the information already given about them by third parties, accused women either incorporated the familiar into their narrative or denied its existence. Elizabeth Bennet broke down and confessed to owning spirits while Annys Glascock denied it. Ales Hunt admitted under interrogation that she indeed had two spirits and that her sister, Margerie Sammon, had two as well. The trail of implications goes on.

In testifying against their mother and grandmother, Joan Cony's[7] grandsons demonstrated their power over adults while handily justifying their lack of industry. The eldest grandson testified that another boy had stolen the wood he had dutifully collected in the woods. Coming home empty-handed, he told Cony about the theft and she sent her spirit to prick the thief in the foot. That boy limped to the bar to testify, a performance that undoubtedly tightened the noose around Cony's neck. These two children seem to have colluded on the details of the attack; in moving laterally, the accusation picked up both momentum and legitimacy. If Cony's grandsons bolstered their grandmother's conviction, that no one in her family refuted Jennet Device's claims made her testimony bulletproof. In 1612, nine-year-old Jennet Device, granddaughter to Elizabeth Southern, testified against her family voluntarily, adding a new, lethal level of accusation to the fray. She testified that she had witnessed twenty witches gathered to feast on "beefe, bacon and roasted mutton" (I3v). This description of a European-style coven electrified the case.

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[7] The story of Joan Cony's (d.1589) story, a part of the Clemsford witch trial, is found in the anonymous tract *The apprehension and confession of three notorious witches. Arraigned and by iustice condemned and executed at Chelmes-forde, in the Countye of Essex, the 5. day of Iulye, last past. 1589.* Joan Cony practiced, she said, for twenty years, and had hurt more in the sixteen years before her trial than she could remember. Joan had had two daughters, one of whom was Margaret (also tried for witchcraft), and the daughters had two sons. These boys, aged ten and twelve were, like Mother Sutton's grandson, the chief witnesses against their mother and grandmother. Joan Cony also implicated her daughter Margaret, saying that she "did fall out with Father Hurrill, and gave him cursed speeches, and ther-upon, she thinketh she sent her spirits to her" (Av2).

Jennet named six witches, and mentioned that her mother, Elizabeth, and brother, James, had been present. Jennet's testimony became canon; her family's testimonies soon fell into line and proliferated the myth she had created.[8]

The Throckmorton Scandal: A Case Study of the Child Accuser

When witchcraft affected an upper-class home, it could proliferate with abandon and create a line-up of victims and witnesses within a single household. Jane Throckmorton's dramatic accusations spread like wildfire through her siblings, parents, the household, extended family, and the community proper. When witchcraft touched the Throckmorton family, as Marion Gibson points out, they became a "disordered family with inverted power relations, chaotic lives, violent, godless, unseemly, and rebellious behavior" (106). It is within this space of behavioral inversion that children had power and even permission to accuse witches. That power, albeit limited, was both addictive and contagious, and the relatively privileged class of the Throckmorton children likely aided in their feelings of entitlement to accuse, their time to indulge in fits, and their parents' financial ability to pursue their allegations.

The progress of the Throckmorton witchcraft case, as outlined in the anonymous *The most strange and admirable discouerie of the three witches of Warboys* (1593), clearly illustrates the powerful and pervasive role played by the community. Mother Alice Samuel (d.1593), neighbor to the north of the Throckmorton family, came to see their daughter Jane when she took ill. Mother Samuel "had not been there long before the Child grew something worse than at her coming, and suddenly cried, pointing to the said Mother Samuel; Did you ever see one more like a Witch than she is? Take off her black thrumb'd Cap, for I cannot abide to look at her" (Boulton 49). This was the first time Mother Samuel had been accused of witchcraft.[9] Mrs. Throckmorton reprimanded Jane for her rudeness and consulted a doctor, who eventually suggested witchcraft might be the culprit.[10] With this prognosis set in place, the other Throckmorton daughters soon came down with the same mysterious illness, and "cry'd out upon Mother Samuel, Take her away, look where she standeth there before us in a black thrumb'd Cap; (which she commonly wore, tho' not then,) it's she that hath bewitched us, and she will kill us if you don't take her away" (52). The eldest and the youngest daughter soon joined in the mayhem and began having fits. With their doctor's supernatural diagnosis and five of their daughters flailing and heaving about, the Throckmortons also began to suspect witchcraft. Like an epidemic, the fits and accusations began to multiply. Twelve in all would suffer, a spirit told Joan Throckmorton.[11] This warning became a self-fulfilling prophecy; eventually all twelve members of the household, servants, daughters, and mother, all heaved and shook and blamed Mrs. Samuel for their suffering. For two years the ripple of accusations extended, touching even new servants who entered the house; although her first accuser was a ten-year-old, the entire household soon accused Mother Samuel of bewitching them.

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[8] This case will be explored in detail in the following section.

When the children's uncle, Mr. Pickering, arrived and Lady Cromwell became involved, the insanity exploded out of the nursery and the parlor, and into the community as a whole. Although the children were fine, Mr. Pickering joined the witch-hunt. He

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[9] Keith Thomas notes that "when the Throckmorton children of Warboys blamed Alice Samuel for their fits, the bystanders at first refused to accept the charge, because they could think of no reason for her malice" (552). However, *In Instruments of Darkness* (1996), James Sharpe looks at the delight the Throckmorton children took in their new, uncurbed power as a potential reason for keeping up the performance, if not for starting it in the first place. The hitherto powerless children took to lecturing the Samuels and playing with their food during their fits. For more information, see Sharpe 190-196, 206-219. In *Demonic Possession and Exorcism in Early Modern England* (2004), Phillip C. Almond also focuses on how the Throckmorton children performed their possession so convincingly that their world, "created by children and endorsed by adults was persuasive and pervasive, so much so that eventually even Mother Samuel herself was convinced of the connection between her presence and the children's health" (73). Also see Barbara Rosen's *Witchcraft in England* (1969).

[10] The doctor originally concluded it might be worms and sent some medicine. The third time they consulted him, when Jane's urine continued to show no signs of natural illness, the doctor "asked if there was no Sorcery or Witchcraft suspected in the Child, to which they answered, No. Upon which he declared it was impossible it should be occasioned by any natural Cause, without any Signs appearing in the Urine" (51). The doctor, who refused to believe he might be missing something, turned the focus from his own incompetence onto an easy scapegoat, a witch. A second doctor was consulted and also suggested worms might be the culprit, but could not detect them in the urine either. Dr. Barrow "having before advised them not to make use of any more Medicines, suspect[ed] that the Distemper was occasion'd by Witchcraft" (52).

invoked some kind of legal capacity to force Mother Samuel to accompany him to the Throckmorton house. With his invocation of legal authority, the witchcraft accusation, which had shifted from the realm of children to adults, from the house into the community, now moved from the private sphere into the legal. The children dutifully began to have fits the moment Mother Samuel arrived.[12] It was the children's relentless, effective and affective performances that convinced Lady Cromwell that Mother Samuel was their tormentor, and eventually, her own, expanding the scope of the furor all the way into the peerage. Fancying herself a witch-hunter, Lady Cromwell demanded that Mother Samuel be brought to her for interrogation; knowing who Lady Cromwell was, she came. Lady Cromwell immediately began to accuse her of bewitching the children, and

> suddenly pulled off her Kircher, and with a Pair of Scissors cut off a Lock of her Hair, and gave it privately to Mrs. Throckmorton with her Hairlace, desiring her to burn them. Mother Samuel finding her self so served spoke thus to the Lady, Madam, Why do you use me thus? I never did you any harm as yet. (74)

With that alleged "as yet" Mother Samuel condemned herself. For four years after that visit, Lady Cromwell had fits and died.

The case of Alice Samuel illustrates how an accusation of witchcraft could expand in concentric circles through a nursery, home, community, and county. Without Jane Throckmorton's original accusation, the witch hysteria that contaminated the home could not have spread. The witch was born with the child and killed by the court; the woman herself seems tangential to the whole episode—so tangential that there was some difficulty, in the Throckmorton case, in actually condemning her. Although Pickering pursued Mother Samuel, and the Throckmorton children regularly spoke to a dun

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[11] Gregory Durston notes that the son of the gaoler became involved in the hysteria as well. He too claimed to be afflicted and began his recovery only after his father held Mother Samuel "physically until his son scratched her," drawing her blood and breaking her spell over him (338).

[12] The tract continues, tracing the various experiments and fits, and goes to some length to trace the intermittent fits Elizabeth Throckmorton had between Warboys and Mr. Pickering's house. After two years of mayhem at the Thockmorton house, and a month of detailed tracking of Elizabeth Throckmorton's fits, the narrative speeds up to fever pitch with Lady Cromwell's arrival.

chicken which confessed that Mother Samuel had sent it, no conclusive evidence appeared for a long time. The strangely arbitrary nature of the alleged attacks seems to have puzzled contemporaries; although the long-winded tract incorporates a number of standard witchcraft elements (talking chickens, witch marks, and demonic bloodlines), it does not hint at any motive for Mother Samuel's supposed crimes. Despite their children's insistent accusations, Mr. and Mrs. Throckmorton could find no reason that Mother Samuel would have chosen their children as her victims. This is a likely reason that the whole episode transpired as long as it did; no motive equaled no conviction. Although after almost four years of continual accusations, Mother Samuel finally confessed to tormenting the Throckmorton children, it was the involvement (and death) of Lady Cromwell, not any of the Throckmortons, which brought events to a head; class jealousy seems to have been easier for Mother Samuel's community to understand, than random malice.[13] When Mother Samuel confessed, however, attention turned to her own family and the process began anew.[14]

Trouble in Lowestoft: A Case Study of the Child Accuser

Numerous accused women were long-time objects of suspicion. They lived in precarious peace along with their communities, and were tolerable neighbors despite their negative reputations. Once a single child accused these women of being witches, however, the community could turn on them *en masse*, happy to find a focus for their myriad complaints. Nonetheless, the accused did not have to play along.[15] Whereas the

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[13] Lady Cromwell had both the knowledge and power to prove the accusations against Mother Samuel, and get her convicted of witchcraft. An attack on Lady Cromwell, however, was an attack on the nobility itself; once Mother Samuel was seen as a witch, from the nursery to the crown, she had no way of negotiating or escaping that identity.

[14] Mother Samuel's daughter Alice and husband John also became suspected of bewitching the Throckmorton family. They were executed along with her.[15] The accusations of children did not always go unchallenged. The 1633 Pendle Hill witch hunt began when a child-accuser, Edmund Robins, supposedly "stumbled onto a witches Sabbath or feast, with about 60 local people present" (Durston 16). Edmund and his father "appear to have earned money by identifying other witches at nearby parishes" and, on Edmund's word, eighteen people were arrested (16). Although seventeen of these were convicted, the judge ordered them reprieves, and Edmund and his father admitted that they had made the story up.

Throckmorton scandal represents the power of children to create a witch within a single home, the trouble in Lowestoft looks to how the concerns in a single home are replicated in the community as a whole. The witchcraft accusation spreads like a game of telephone played by adolescent girls. The original accusation against one witch, Amy Denny, is morphed into an accusation against two witches. Rose Cullender's identification as the second witch eventually becomes secondary – she soon stands alone as one of the accused. The power to accuse is a guilty pleasure, and in Lowestoft, it represents not only the power of children to create witches as the Throckmorton children did, but also how whole community of young women could make them real.

The small village of Lowestoft had two problems: they were in dispute with Yarmouth about fishing rights, and they suspected that they had witches in their midst. They regained their fishing rights the same way they rid themselves of two suspected witches: by currying influence with the right person, Judge Matthew Hale. Amy Denny was tried at the infamous

1645 Lamentable fire in Lowestoft which destroyed 39 houses, 20 of them fish houses.
1657 ***March 10*** Dorothy Durrant leaves her infant son William in the care of Amy Denny-afterwards he has swooning fits. Weeks later (April?), Durrant uses countermagic to cure him and allegedly burns Denny in the process.
1659 ***March 6*** Elizabeth Durrant has fits.
March 8 (if Durrant went to the apothecary within 2 days) Denny prophesies the child's death.
March 10 Elizabeth Durrant dies.
March Shortly after Elizabeth's death, Dorothy Durrant goes lame.
1660 Petition from Lowestoft to the house of Lords regarding fishing rights.
December Samuel Pacy and Thomas Mighell set out for a four month trip to solicit support for fishing rights case.
1661 ***June 20*** Pacy & Mighell's case sent to the Privy council. It is a short meeting.
June 22 A longer meeting takes place, decision deferred until panel of judges returned decision.
June 25-27 Pacy is reimbursed for travel, presumably to the Privy council meetings.
October 10 Deborah Pacy goes lame.

Table 1: Chronology of events for the Lowestoft trials.

Lowestoft witchcraft trails; her story is recounted, along with Rose Cullender's, in *A Tryal of Witches*. These two girls, accused of bewitching Samuel Pacy's nine- and eleven-year-old daughters, were tried in 1662.[16] Geis and Bunn calculate that Pacy's daughters had been having fits for more than four months, and Amy Denny had already been sent to the stocks for bewitching them, when Cullender and Denny were "arrested for witchcraft and held for trial before Hale at the upcoming assize session" (20).[17]

Although Lowestoft seemed to have influence with Hale, community sentiment against these women had already begun to well up from its least members to its largest through the course of the trial. Dorothy

October 17	Amy Denny, turned away from the Pacy home three times, leaves mumbling incoherently, Deborah Pacy becomes sick with fits for 13 days. Blames Amy Denny for her illness.
October 28	Pacy has Denny put in the stocks.
October 31	Denny makes obscure (and construed as threatening) criticism about Pacy's child rearing.
November 2	Elizabeth Pacy falls into fits so extreme that they have to open her mouth with a tap. Deborah follows suit and her mouth also has to be opened with a tap. Fits last two months. They blame Amy Denny at first, then Amy Denny and another woman, and finally Amy Denny and Rose Cullender.
November ("latter end")	Rose Cullender came to Edmund Durrant's home to buy fish. His wife turns her away.
December 1	Ann Durrant began to have fits. (Jane Bocking began to have the same kind of fits at the same time).

Table 1: Chronology of events for the Lowestoft trials. (continued)

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[16] In *A Trial of Witches*, an extensive, in-depth study of the Lowestoft trial, Gilbert Geis and Ivan Bunn explore numerous causes for Cullender and Denny's trial and executions. Although it is impossible to address all of the issues they see as possible contributing factors here, Cullender and Denny's trial was clearly a community affair. Samuel Pacy was a "prominent Lowestoft merchant and owner of several herring boats" at a time when "a centuries-old dispute [over fishing rights] between Lowestoft and Great Yarmouth, its prosperous northern neighbor, again heated up" (11, 13). Sir Matthew Hale, the judge who was to preside over the witchcraft case, was a "member of the judicial panel adjudicating the Lowestoft [fishing rights] dispute" (18). According to Peter Elmer, to what "extent Hale's familiarity with the victims' father affected his judgement in this case is impossible to state with certainty. What is clear, however, is that those who shared his distaste for the new laws against dissenters do seem to have been noticeably more willing to pursue those enemies of Christ, witches, than they were to subject innocent, god-fearing Christians to the full rigour of the new penal laws against dissent" (114). James Wilde, the head of the town's petitioners, records that on December 4th, 1661, Lowestoft gave a financial gift to "Lord Chief Baron Hale's man and Robert Lumley for their trouble of waiting on the judges and getting their hands [i.e. obtaining their signatures] . . . 1.0.0" (Geis and Bunn 18). On February 1st, 1662, a barrel of herring was likewise given to "lord chief baron Hales," and other supporters of their case (*ibid.*). Geis and Bunn note that "the rendering up of gratuities to judicial officers and their staff was a commonplace occurrence, not to be seen as a form of bribery (although of course it could be that), but as a

Durrant[18] was the first witness to testify. Her history with Denny was extensive, and had begun five years earlier when she had hired Denny to care for her child.[19] She specifically instructed Denny not to pacify the crying child with her breast.[20] Denny did anyway, and confessed as much to her employer when she returned: "Amy did acquaint her, That she had given Suck to the Child contrary to her command" (4). The two women fought; Denny used "high Expressions and Threatening Speeches towards her; telling her, That she had as good to have done otherwise than to have found fault with her, and so departed out

December 4 Preliminary meeting. Decision to allow reps from Lowestoft and Yarmouth to plead their cases on Jan 24, 1662.
1662 *February 1* Hale receives 200 herring as a gift from Lowestoft.
February 1 Jane Bocking begins to have fits.
February (beginning) Mary Chandler is hired to search Rose Culleder for witch's marks. Finds them. The next day Cullender appears to Susan Chandler, frightening her. Susan Chandler began to have pin-vomiting fits.
February 26 House of Lords adopts judges findings in favor of Lowestoft. They win the dispute.
March 10 Trial against Amy Denny and Rose Cullender begins.
March 13 Cullender and Denny are indicted.

Table 1: Chronology of events for the Lowestoft trials. (continued)

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recognition of services" (19). On February 26th, "two weeks before the witch trial would begin, the House of Lords adopted the judges' findings in favor of Lowestoft" (19). "Lord Hale'sGentlemen," Geis and Bunn note, "would be given another 100 red herring (in March 1663) and a share of a further 600 fish (in October 1664)" (19).

[17] Their arrest took place within two weeks of Hale's employees receiving the first gift of fish (20). Geis and Bunn do not state that Hale was bribed into supporting Lowestoft's fishing rights petition, nor do they come right out and say that Hale greased the wheels of justice to secure Cullender and Denny's arrest and prosecution. There is no doubt, however, that Hale's familiarity with Lowestoft's generosity likely influenced the case. As the two authors point out, Lowestoft turned to Hale for help with its witches, as it had turned to him for help with their fish; they hoped he would again see the case their way.

[18] The spelling "Durrant" is the one favored by Geis and Bunn; her name is spelled Durent "in the trial record, but Durrant in the indictment" (40).[19] Denny was neither begging, nor turned away, as MacFarlane's 'charity-refused' paradigm would anticipate. Rather, it is likely that Durrant approached Denny, perhaps even in her home, to hire her.

[20] This prohibition struck even contemporaries as somewhat odd:

> Upon which it was asked by the Court, why she did give that direction, she [Denny] being an old Woman and not capable of giving Suck? It was answered by the said Dorothy Durent, that she very well knew that she did not give Suck, but that for some years before, she had gone under the Reputation of a Witch, which was one cause made her give her the caution: Another was, That it was customary with old Women, that if they did look after a sucking Child, and nothing would please it but the Breast, they did use to please the Child

of her House" (5). As happens in most witchcraft cases, that very night, the infant, William, became sick; Durrant consulted Dr. Jacob,[21] who "who had a reputation in that country to help children who were bewitched" (5). After some successful counter-magic involving the burning of a toad found when the infant's blanket was hung by the fire, William recovered.[22] Two years later, however, Durrant's daughter Elizabeth became ill and died after a visit from Denny. Durrant herself became lame after Elizabeth's death, and pointed at Denny as the cause.[23] According to Durrant's account, she at first saw Denny only as a suspected witch, who "hath been long reputed to be a Witch, and a person of very evil behaviour, whose Kindred and Relations have been many of them accused for Witchcraft, and some of them have been Condemned" (10). Despite the fact that Durrant claimed that she was

March 14 Elizabeth and Deborah Pacy and Susan Chandler are brought before Hale; they recover except for Chandler who still had stomach pains.
March 17 Rose Cullender and Amy Denny hung.
1663 *March* Lord Hale's gentlemen would receive 100 herring.
1664 *October* Lord Hale's gentlemen would receive 600 fish.
1682 *Tryall of Witches* published.

Table 1: Chronology of events for the Lowestoft trials. (continued)

> to give it the Breast, and it did please the Child, but it sucked nothing but Wind, which did the Child hurt (*A Tryal* 3-4) .

It seems improbable that any mother, regardless of how badly she had to leave home, would entrust a known witch to baby-sit her infant son. Likely, Durrant had all but dismissed the rumor that Denny was a witch. She gives two explanations for her order: one as a general caution, on the off chance Denny was in fact a witch, and the other, based on commonly accepted wisdom.

[21] Durrant's consultation with Dr. Jacob shows how active the belief in witches was in Lowestoft and the surrounding areas. Geis and Bunn have found no conclusive evidence that Dr. Jacob existed, and the name could have been an alias. During their visit in Lowestoft, a "hand written description of the witch trial was donated by an elderly man to the town museum run by the Lowestoft & District Local History Society" (47). This serendipitous and anonymous manuscript contains an entry by Isaac Gillingwater, brother to Edmund Gillingwater, Lowestoft's earliest historian. The note describes Dr. Jacob as a tall, graying, often inebriated person who "had the reputation of being able to counteract the machinations of witches and on that account resorted to by the superstitious" (48). This entry, although compelling, cannot be substantiated. Geis and Bunn call Jacob a white witch or wizard, but more likely he was a cunning man. [22] Burning the toad to hurt the witch (who had transformed herself into the animal) was sympathetic magic.

[23] Curiously, the court seemed willing to look for a natural reason for Durrant's illness and suspected that menstruating had something to do with it: "The Court asked her, That at the time she was taken with this Lameness, if it were with her according to the Custom of Women? Her Answer was, that it was so, and that she never had any stoppages of those things, but when she was with Child" (11).

Parent	*Children*
Dorothy Durrant	William Elizabeth
Samuel Pacy	Deborah Elizabeth
Edmund Durrant	Ann
Robert & Mary Chandler (stepmother)	Susan
Diana Bocking	Jane Bocking Ann Baldwin

Table 2: Lowestoft Families

now certain that Denny was a witch, and one who had caused her son and daughter's illnesses and Elizabeth's death, she did not bring Denny to trial herself, a fact never explained in the tract. Durrant's testimony is crucial in Cullender and Denny's trial for a number of reasons; primarily, it illustrates how entrenched Denny's reputation as a witch had been--being a link in a long line of suspected witches was always a negative. It also illustrates how five years of Durrant's limping could affirm Denny's power as witch in the community; Durrant performed the witch as much as Denny did.

Given Denny's strong and visible reputation as a witch, it is easy to see how Elizabeth and Deborah Pacy came to accuse her of bewitching them as well. Seven days before Denny even appeared in court, Deborah Pacy was suddenly, very much like Durrant, "taken with a Lameness in her Leggs, so that she could not stand, neither had she any strength in her Limbs to support her" (15). Denny soon came to the Pacy home to buy some off-market herring. Three times she asked to buy the fish and three times she was sent away, the last time grumbling incoherently. Deborah immediately began to have great swooning fits which lasted for two weeks until they consulted a doctor. Dr. Feavor[24] was unable to find a natural cause for the child's elaborate shrieking fits. She had already, in her fits and in her lucid states, started blaming Denny for bewitching her.

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[24] Geis and Bunn note that there is no Dr. Feavor registered in the Lowestoft parish registers. They offer a few suggestions of who this man might have been, but have no evidence to prove his existence.

The doctor, with no other diagnosis to offer, chose the path of least resistance and agreed with the hysterical child. Curiously, Denny's punishment for this crime was served in the stocks.[25] She should have been free once her time was served; however, the Pacys were not done with her yet. When asked by two local women why she was tormenting Deborah Pacy, Denny noted that Pacy should keep quiet about his daughter until he had done as much for his daughter as she had done for hers. Within two days of making this semi-threatening and conveniently opaque statement, Elizabeth, the elder sister, fell into fits as well. Only when both children started having fits did they mention *another* woman, whom they saw operating along with Denny:

> Amy Duny (together with one other Woman whose person and Cloathes they described) did thus Afflict them, their Apparitions appearing before them, to their great terrour and affrightment: And sometimes they would cry out, saying, There stands Amy Duny, and there Rose Cullender; the other Person troubling them. (20)

The tract is not clear at this point regarding who identified Rose Cullender as the other witch tormenting the children;[26] however, Deborah and Elizabeth soon started vomiting up pins and nails,[27] chasing invisible animals (or familiars), and striking out and scratching at the air, calling out Denny and Cullender's names. By the actual trial date,

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[25] Based on his own beliefs, but backed by Dr. Feavor, Pacy testified at the trial that

> Amy Duny is a Woman of an ill Fame, & commonly reported to be a Witch & Sorcerese and for that the said Child would cry out of Amy Duny in her fits the cause of her Malady, and that she did affright her with Apparitions of her Person (as the Child in the intervals of her fits related) this Deponent did suspect the said Amy Duny for a Witch, and charged her with the injury and wrong to his Child, and caused her to be set in the Stocks on the Twenty eighth of the same October.
> (17-18)

[26] This could have been an editorial addition, naming Cullender as their victimizer once she had already been accused. Similarly, the children might have decided to add a new character later in the game, and decided, after some vague references, that that player would be Rose Cullender.

[27] Vomiting up foreign objects was a common symptom in cases of possession and bewitchment.

Deborah was apparently too ill to appear in court, and Elizabeth, although she had violent and performative fits, could not testify.

The accusations picked up steam, and several more witnesses came forward to accuse Denny, Cullender, or both of bewitching them. Ann Durrant, Anne Baldwin and Jane Bocking's cases are so similar to Deborah and Elizabeth Pacy's that a thorough retelling would be redundant.[28] Although there are individual characteristics to each of the girls' fits, they duplicate each other enough to beg some sort of explanation for the similarity. We cannot prove that the girls were not bewitched; this explanation seems as unlikely to a present-day audience as it seemed absolutely plausible to a seventeenth-century one. On the other hand, the girls may have shared a burgeoning hysteria or psychosomatic reaction to the fear of witches in their midst. It is clear, however, that the vomiting and shrieking fits the girls were having were connected, spatially, geographically, chronologically, by gender, age, and the parameters of their fits. All of their fits took place within the same six-month period, and happened sequentially. Since no one could keep a secret, or keep out of anyone else's business in an early modern English village, in all likelihood, the girls were acquainted with the swooning fits happening around them, and through malice, hysteria, or thirst for attention, found themselves performing the same roles for equally transfixed audiences.

Mary Chandler's testimony, the last of the pin-vomiting, shrieking, swooning, and mute girl stories, is, however, unique in some ways. It has two main functions in the court case: it establishes another victim, Susan Chandler, and identifies Cullender's motive for bewitching her. Mary Chandler's status was also different among the witnesses; she had legal as well as personal standing in the community. She reports that

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[28] Edmund Durrant (who does not appear to have been related to Dorothy Durrant) testified for his daughter Ann, who, like Elizabeth, came to the trial, but was stricken silent and could not testify. Jane Bocking also appeared in court mute, with her mother speaking for her. Ann Baldwin seems to have been capable of being "Sworn and Examined, Depos[ing] the same thing as touching the Bewitching of the said Ann Durent," but we are provided with no more information than this concerning her testimony, so she too is without an individual voice (32).

> a warrant being granted at the request of the said Mr. Pacy, by Sir Edmund Bacon Baronet, one of the Justices of the Peace for the County of Suffolk to bring them before him, and they being brought before him were Examined, and Confessed nothing. He gave order that they should be searched; whereupon this Deponent with five others were appointed to do the same. ("Tryal" 35-36)

Mary Chandler was appointed by the court as one of five women who were supposed to search the suspected witch for witch's marks. They stripped Cullender naked twice and found witch's marks on her lower abdomen and genitals. The morning after this disturbingly thorough investigation, Cullender appeared to Susan Chandler, Mary's daughter, and took her by the hand. Cullender, or her apparition, did not say anything to Susan, but the young woman became so terrified that she ran to her mother and soon fell into a pin-vomiting fit. Mary Chandler then became both an officer of the court and a witness, with authority over the witch but no protection from her powers.

It is possible that Denny and Cullender, foreseeing their demise, decided to take as many young girls and women with them as possible. It is more likely, however, that the community had decided long ago, based on family and personal reputations, that these women were likely witches. The accusations stacked one on top of another, moving across the community like a virus and mutating ever so slightly as they went. Although much of the proof[29] used in the trial hinged on a mysterious, hysterical illness which local girls and young women, in their fits, pinned on Cullender and Denny, these women's local reputation as witches gave the children's illnesses credibility. Despite a general and legal consensus that Denny and Cullender were witches, the women refused to confess, a fact that the pamphleteer mentions twice. There is a hint in this repetition of nervous hesitation. With their refusal to collude with their persecutors, Denny and Cullender deny them a tidy conclusion to the narrative.

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[29] As with most cases, several witnesses were brought to throw their stories of Denny and Cullender into the mix. John Soam had a cart that he believed Cullender bewitched after he hit her house with it. Robert Sherringham also told a tale of Rose Cullender bewitching his cart. Richard Spenser said he heard Denny threaten revenge on Cornelius Sandeswell's wife. According to Ann Sandeswell, Denny predicted the death of her geese, the tumbling of her chimney, and somehow made her delivery of fish fall into the sea.

Peer to Peer

Accusations did not only spring up from the mouths of babes. Women who identified themselves as witches likewise often accused other women of making them so. Women acted as witnesses against one another; Clive Holmes argues that "women were simply better placed than men to describe the incidents and activities that conformed to the altered perception of the nature of witchcraft as a criminal offence" (305). Alleged witches had numerous and complicated reasons for naming and testifying against other women. Women like Elizabeth Francis accused others in order to sustain herself as a kind of local expert on witches; testifying kept her safe. As they were in the McCarthy trials, cross-allegations were also worked into the examination process; women would automatically be asked to identify other witches. Joan Cony, for example, stated that she learned her craft from another woman, Mother Humfrye of Maplested (A4). Joan Upney also testified that "one Fustian Kirtle, otherwise called White-cote, a witch of *Barking*, came to her house about seaven or eight yeeres agoe, and gave her a thing like a Moule, and tolde her if she ought any body any ill will, if she did bid it, it would goe clap them" (Av2). Testifying against others provided women an opportunity to discursively distance themselves from some culpability, by claiming that witchcraft was something done *to* them.

"Just One More Thing, Mr. Darcey...": A Case Study in Peer Accusations

Faced with having to respond to allegation of witchcraft, Ursely Kempe tried on a variety of different subject positions: she claimed to be a cunning woman, later admitted to having imps, and, finally, offered other women up to the gallows. Kempe represents a chilling moment of peer-to-peer cross-allegation. Whereas Kempe's profiling of other women as witches might be read as an attempt to please her examiner, Brian Darcey, it seems more likely that she is trying to escape into the shadows by directing the glare of the courtroom towards whomever the examiners wanted illuminated – multiplying one, into a myriad of witches. Kempe illustrates not only the legal dangers of having a witch point her finger at another woman, but the complicated negotiation one might make in writing their final narratives.

Ursley Kempe (d. 1582), one of the thirteen witches tried at St. Oses (*A True and Just Relation*, 1582), became a witch through education and association. Brian Darcey, Marion Gibson writes, "took the examinations himself, and in their similarities to examinations surviving in legal records they appear untouched," if also "embellished with authorial intrusions" (*Stories* 38). This "self congratulatory account of his short but spectacular account of his career as a witch-hunter" illustrates how top-down power influences the peer to peer accusation (Holmes 308). On February 19th, 1582, Grace Thurlowe and Annis Letherdall accused Kempe of witchcraft.[30] She responded to their accusation, but rather than confessing to witchcraft, she admitted only to being a healer:

> The saide Ursley Kempe sayeth, that about tenne or eleuen yeeres paste, shee this examinate was troubled with a lamenes in her bones, and for ease thereof, went to one Cockes wife of Weley, nowe deceased, who telled this examinate that shee was bewitched, and at her entretie taught her to unwitche her self . . . . The sayde examinate sayth, that one Pages wife, and one Grayes wife, beeing eyther of them lame and bewitched: shee beeing requested and sent for to come unto them, went unto them: And saieth, that shee knewe them to bee bewitched, and at their desires did

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[30] On February 25, her eight-year-old son, Thomas Rabbet, expanded on their accusations. He had had six days to concoct his own story.

> minister vnto them the foresaid medicine, whereupon they had speedie amendement. (A7-va7)

Kempe shifts from victim to cunning woman to witch; she locates herself within the appropriate discourse, but does so to look innocent, then benignly powerful. Dissatisfied with her confession, Darcey promised Kempe "that if shee would deale plainely and confesse the trueth, that shee should have fauour" (A7v). Influenced by his "faire speeches," she confessed to having imps and using them to punish "Thorlows wife, and . . . Letherdalls Childe and kill her brother's wife for calling her a whore and a witch" (A7v-A8). Gibson asserts, "Ursely Kempe and Annis Glascock of St. Osyth, begin their path to acceptance of the questioner's idea of witchcraft by talking about their own experiences of being bewitched, and the cures prescribed" (27). Curiously, however, she reconsidered her tactics and turned the focus away from herself entirely:

> The said Ursley, being committed to the ward & keeping of the Constable that night, upon some speeches that shee had passed, said, that shee had forgotten to tell M. Darcey one thing, where upon the next day she was brought before Brian Darcey, & the second time examined, who confessed and said. That about a quarter of a yeere last past, one Ales Neweman, her nere neighbour came unto this examinates house and fel out with her, and said shee was a witche, and that shee woulde take away her witcherie, and carrie the same vnto M. Darcey: But this examinate saieth, shee thought shee did not meane it, but after they had chidden they became friendes, and so shee departed carying away with her, her spirites in a pot, as this examinate sayth. (Bv)

Gibson reads this second confession as "not simply as a self-indulgent, attention seeking ploy, but a complex rethinking of her position" (33). Kempe is, Gibson notes, absolving herself "of blame for either keeping or sending spirits" (34). She is merely Ales Neweman's client; Neweman is the witch, one who is both strong enough to take imps and resilient enough to command them. Kempe continues to distance herself from her earlier confession by providing Darcey with alternate witches: Elizabeth Bennet, Annis Glascocke, and Ales Newman. Kempe's peer-to-peer accusations were made neither in malice, nor through indoctrination, nor to save her own skin; she accused other women to win favor and gain some degree of power in an impossibly unfavorable, powerless situation.

Witches in Pendle Hill Forest: A Case Study in Peer Accusations

If Ursley Kempe stands as an example of a single woman accusing her peers, the Pendle Hill witches illustrate the power of two families accusing one another. The war between the families of Old Chattox and Old Demdike also demonstrates the courts' agenda, as they asserted the power of the state by exploiting existing social tensions to bring powerful witches out of the woods and up to the gallows.

The wonderfull discoverie of witches in the countie of Lancaster (1612), as assembled and edited by Thomas Potts, is constructed with bits of indictments and examinations

1612
March 13th

Alizon Device's examination was taken at Read, Lancaster before Roger Nowell.

Charges were laid against Elizabeth Southern, alias Demdike, her Grandmother. Alizon saw an imp feed from her grandmother and took her grandmother to John Nutter's house to cure a cow. When the cow died, she suspected her grandmother of bewitching it. She also accused her grandmother of magically making milk. She likewise accused her of bewitching his child to death after Richard Baldwin would not let her grandmother on his land.

Wednesday March 18

Alizon Device cursed John Law, a peddler, after he refuses to sell her some pins. Moments later the peddler collapses with a seizure. Alizon was convinced that she was the cause and voluntarily confessed to bewitching him. John Law forgives her.

Monday March 30th

Elizabeth Device at Read before Roger Nowell.

John Law's son, Abraham Law, brought Alizon's confession to the attention of the authorities. Alizon, her mother Elizabeth and brother James are questioned by the Magistrate Roger Nowell. Elizabeth Device confessed that "Old Demdike had a place at her left side for the past forty years." Alizon was detained.

Table 3: Examinations and Trial of Pendle Hill Witches at Lancaster

sewn together to narrate the explosion of accusations between two peer groups and their friends. According to Marion Gibson, "Potts knows his material and procedures well, and seems to give a generally trustworthy, though not a comprehensive, account of an assize witchcraft trial"; basing his account on written material, rather than acting as an eyewitness to the trial, Potts constructs as linear a narrative as is possible (61). Although accusations may have sped toward a fever pitch when nine-year-old Jennet Device introduced the story of a meeting of witches, once adult confessors took over, they included a malefic conspiracy to blow up Lancaster Castle and release the four witches held prisoner inside. *The wonderfull discoverie* illustrates how the indictment, examination, interrogation, and confession process, through a kind of accusatory mitosis, created new witchcraft accusations each time a person was accused. G.B. Harrison, in the introduction to the 1929 reprint of *The wonderful discoverie,* relates the story of the Lancaster witches as Potts does, beginning with Old Demdike selling her soul to a spirit and, five years later,

Tuesday, April 2 *Elizabeth Southern's "Old Demdike" Fence in Pendle Hill Forest, Lancaster, before Roger Nowell.* Confessed to having sold her soul to Tibb "twenty years past" so "she would have anything that she would request" (B2v). Five or six years later, after having not requested anything, Tibb attacks her and gets blood from under her arm. She claimed that she went "starke madd for the space of twenty weeks" (B3). Baldwyn threatens Demdike and her daughter Alizon Device "get out my ground Whores and Witches, I will burn the one of you, and hang the other" (B3). Demdike cursed him, and her spirit appeared, and demanded "revenge thee of him…Revenge thee of him or his" and vanished out of sight. She then tells how "the speediest way to take a man's life away by witchcraft, is to make a picture" (B3v).
Saturday, April 4 Alizon, Demdike, Chattox and Redfearn imprisoned in Lancaster gaol.
Friday, April 10 (Good Friday) Alleged date of the great meeting at Malkin tower of friends of the accused witches. It is believed by the courts to have been a witches Sabbath.
Monday, April 27th James Device examined before Roger Nowell and Nicholas Banister.

Table 3: Examinations and Trial of Pendle Hill Witches at Lancaster (continued)

convincing Old Chattox to do the same. He mentions that these two family matriarchs practiced witchcraft with their offspring and neighbors for years before they fell out. Meanwhile, Robert Nutter, whom Mrs. Elizabeth Nutter tried to hire Chattox to kill, fell afoul of the Redfearn family. Chattox's daughter, Anne Redfearn, lived on Nutter's land with her family. After she refused his sexual advances, he threatened that she would be expelled from the land if he inherited it. Demdike subsequently saw Anne and her mother making clay images of the Nutter family. Robert Nutter sickened and died.

Around 1601, the Demdike and Chattox families began to quarrel when Alizon Demdike (now Device) saw Anne Redfearn wearing clothing that had been stolen from their firehouse. A temporary truce, based on payment in restitution, fell through shortly before Anne Redfearn's father died. Spurred on by mutual hatred, the warring families became so blatant and active in their assaults against each other

Monday, April 27th
Confessed that about a month earlier he saw a dog coming from his grandmother's house and heard screaming. Five nights later he heard a "foule yelling like unto a great number of cattes" close to her house (C2). Three nights after that a black thing "about the bigeness of a hare or catte" lay heavily on his chest for about an hour (c2). He said that a Henry Bullocke had come to his grandmother's house and said that Alizon Device had bewitched his daughter. Alizon confessed at Bullocke's house, and James heard his sister confess.
Tuesday, May 19
While a prisoner at Lancaster goal, Anne Wittle, "Old Chattox," was questioned before William Sandes (mayor), James Anderton (JP) and Thomas Corwell (coroner). Anne Wittle confessed that "Fourteen years ago, Demdike convinced her to become a witch. Saw an imp offer Old Demdike "gould, silver and worldly wealth, at her will" (B4v). She also confessed that she ate a demonic meal and admitted to bewitching Robert Nutter to death with Demdike and Widdow Lomshawe's help. She claimed Demdike had bewitched Richard Ashton (B4v).
Monday, July 27
Jennet Preston, who attended the meeting at Malkin Tower, found guilty of the murder Thomas Lister.

Table 3: Examinations and Trial of Pendle Hill Witches at Lancaster (continued)

that Robert Nowell, the local Justice of the Peace, brought the two matriarchs and their daughters in for questioning, and confined them at Lancaster Castle. Other local witches, outraged by the arrests, evidently met at Malking Tower to eat stolen mutton and plot the assassination of Mr. Cowel, the keeper of the Castle, and the bombing of the Castle itself, to release the prisoners. Robert Nowell supposedly heard of this and arrested those involved in the plot.[31]

Marion Gibson points out that, although Potts has organized the various indictments into a kind of narrative, each with the record of the trial, the prisoners were "arraigned until there were enough for a trial. . .[and] in fact the courts were so over worked that juries had to assess too many prisoners to remember the facts of each case" (55). Likewise, despite being presented and organized as if they were oral testimony, the indictments in the tract were, in reality, pre-trial examinations conducted well before the trial itself. Gibson asserts that these "fragmented informations" alter the "order and evidence of witch and witness examinations and informations" (59). As

Wednesday, July 29 Jennet Preston hung at York.
Tuesday August 18 The trial of the Pendle Witches begins at Lancaster. Elizabeth Device, James Device, and Chattox are found guilty of witchcraft. Anne Redfearn is acquitted on the preliminary charges.
Wednesday August 19 Anne Redfearn was tried on a second charge of witchcraft and found guilty. Alizon Device, Alice Nutter, Katherine Hewitt, John Bulcock, Jane Bulcock, Margaret Pearson and Isobel Robey were all tried and found guilty.
Thursday August 20 Alizon Device, Elizabeth Device, James Device, Chattox, Anne Redfearn, Alice Nutter, Katherine Hewitt, John Bulcock, Jane Bulcock, and Isobel Robey were hung at Lancaster gaol.
Thursday November 16 Thomas Potts finished his account of the Lancashire Witch Trial, later published as the book: *The Wonderful Discoverie of Witches in the Countie of Lancaster.*

Table 3: Examinations and Trial of Pendle Hill Witches at Lancaster (continued)

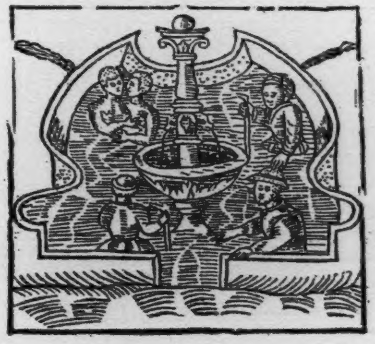

Figure 20: Illustration from Potts' text.

with many tracts and pamphlets, the narrative is mediated and cannot be recognized as any definitive kind of truth. By grouping together witches and prisoners, both within the gaol and within the text, Potts helps connect the witches to form a conspiratorial web. By fracturing and re-arranging the narrative, he designs an agreed-upon version of history.

Potts is "typical in blending perceived fact and comment" in his description of Elizabeth Southern, alias Demdike, with whose story he begins his narrative reconstruction (134). For fifty years, Demdike had supposedly been a witch in Pendle Hill Forest, where she "brought up her own children, instructed graund-children, and tooke greate care and paines to bring them up witches" (Bv-B2). Demdike is presented as creating her own legion of witches to torment the surrounding neighborhood. Despite the fact that she died awaiting trial, the terror began with her; it made sense that the narrative should as well. This version of history tidily illustrates the branching out of familial and associative witchcraft and the events that brought these secret families into the light of justice. Potts and Harrison tell captivating versions of the story, but more engaging is the tale of how accusations actually spread across the community.[32]

Although Potts and Harrison both begin the story with the matriarchs of the families, feuding dark sisters whose families began a witch's Mafiosi turf war, the legal narrative begins with Old Demdike's granddaughter, Alizon Device. She was originally

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[31] As already mentioned, this account is summarized from G.B. Harrison's reconstruction of events, which follows Potts' in form.

[32] The Potts text dates Alizon's original examination as "The Examination of Alizon Device taken at Reade in the said Countie of Lancaster, the xiij day of March." According to the chronology, that would have been five days before she lamed the Pin-peddler, and five days before there was any immediate reason to bring her in for questioning. In this examination she only discusses her grandmother. The easiest explanation for this is that it is a typo; the date was originally written down wrong. Gibson believes this is "anomalous. It seems to be a mistake in the original 1612 text - that seems to me the only way it makes sense. There could be something more sinister going on, since sometimes magistrates and/or pamphleteers seem to alter dates" (email, Friday July 30, 2004). If Alizon was questioned on the thirteenth, the questioning process could have acted as suggestion; the implication that she was a witch later led her to believe that she was effective when cursing the peddler. She appeared to be the most emotional and easily manipulated adult member of her family. If indeed Nowell was looking to persecute these families, and Alizon had a reputation for being emotional, she was likely an easy mark and logical person to begin interrogating for information on her family.

"indicted and arraigned" because she "felloniously had practiced, exercised, and used her Devillish and wicked arts, called witchcrafts, inchantments, charmes, and sorceries, in, and upon, one John Law, a petti-chapman and him had lamed" (R3).[33] Device appears to have openly confessed to this crime when,

> being at the Barre & now beholding the Pedler, deformed by her Witch-craft, and transformed beyond the course of nature, appeared to give evidence against her; having not yet pleaded to her indictment, saw it was in vaine to denie it, or stand upon her justification : she humbly upon her knees at the Barre with weeping tears, prayed the court to heare her. (R3)

Potts notes that her confession "agreeth verbatim with her own examination taken at Reade . . . the thirteenth day of March before Master Nowell" (R4). What exactly is "verbatim"? If it were only then that Alizon felt compelled to confess, seeing John Law's crippled and deformed body, what did she say at her Examination? Alizon appears to be the first person brought in for questioning, on March 13th; in turn, after acknowledging her own witchcraft, she implicated her grandmother and Old Chattox. The cross-pollination of implications is dizzying. The two old women implicated each other; Demdike implicated Chattox's daughter, Anne Redfearn, and Old Chattox also implicated Margaret Pearson. James, old Demdike's son, implicated his grandmother, his mother, his sister, Old Chattox, and Alice Nutter.

Elizabeth confirmed her daughter Jennet's accusation that she and her son James had dined with witches. James agreed that there had been witches at his grandmother's house, plotting three tasks. The first task was elaborating on Jennet's assertion that "Alizon Device, now a prisoner in Lancaster," had a spirit, and was therefore a witch (I2v). The second was the liberation of the prisoners,[34] and blowing up the Castle. The third purpose of the meeting was to act as a witch's council for a woman whose powers were too weak to kill Master Lister of Westby herself.

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[33] As Gibson points out, there are three versions of this story told in Potts' text. Device tells the story of trying to buy the pins from John Law and being refused the sale. Law himself says she was trying to beg them, and his son says she was trying to buy them, but had no money. Obviously, these three versions of the story present vastly different implications to the modern reader; however, the inconsistency does not seem to be regarded as important in the trial.

Nineteen people were accused of witchcraft, and thirteen were found guilty; two of those convicted died in the gaol, and the remaining eleven were executed. The Lancashire witch trials illustrate how easily peers could identify each other as witches, even at the risk of admitting their own malefic crimes. There are numerous contributing factors to explain why the case exploded: the broken friendship of the witching families, Alizon Device's guilty conscience for laming the peddler, Jennet Device's embryonic witches' Sabbath (a story substantially expanded upon by her mother and brother), and the subsequent implication of even more people as witches. Thomas Potts' *Wonderful Discovery* presents two families whose accusations multiplied from within and spread amongst a supposedly small and secret network of witches, who would rather turn on each other than take the fall alone.

From the Top Down

Accusations could manifest themselves hierarchically. Because the accused is always already in an almost certainly powerless position, an accusation from a member of an elite exploits existing power relations to the point where even the most stubborn refusal to admit to using malefic magic, the most complex negotiation of the confessional mode, or even the most mercenary offering up of peers, offers little in the way of escape. Because, as Peter Ruston notes, "external opinion was sometimes central in either initiating or confirming the shift in definition" from woman to witch" (29), those who were better-educated, higher up the social ladder, or professional witch hunters, could build on their social, financial, or judicial privileges. Even elite accusers, however, needed to draw on their community for support; though they relied on their social rank to reinforce their credibility, they also needed tangled village tensions with which to play out their accusations. Lady Manners eavesdropped on employee gossip, Master Engers encouraged a frothing mob to help him swim Mother Sutton, and Matthew Hopkins found Rebecca West's imaginative claims sufficiently detailed to begin a witch hunt. The top-down accusation is almost a misnomer – all prosecutions eventually needed judicial approval—however, it offers the most obvious example of an attempt to re-inscribe the order which witchcraft inverted, by those who had the most to gain by this re-balancing.

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[34] Curiously, Anne Chattox and Anne Redfearn, the apparent mortal enemies of these families, were among the four set free.

Rubbing Rutterkin and Skipping the Hog:
A Case Study in Elite Accusations

Joan Flower and her daughters, Margaret and Philip (d.1618), were part of the community feeding into and working in Sir Francis Manners' estate. According to *The Wonderful Discoverie of the Witchcrafts of Margaret and Phillip Flower* (d.1619), "Beaver Castle was a continuall Pallace of entertainment, and a daily receptacle for all sorts both rich and poore, especially such ancient people as neighboured the same" (C2v). Here, the tract's author is trying to construct Beaver Castle as a welcoming, smoothly-functioning, mutually beneficial community under the protective and paternal eye of Sir Francis Manners. The Flowers entered this utopian landscape, by the grace of its Earl and Lady, and tainted it. Although the author swears she disdained entertaining gossip, the bad news about the Flowers women came to Lady Manners through the community grapevine; some of Joan Flower's "neighbours dared to affirme that shee dealt with familiar spirits, and terrified them all with curses and threatning of revenge, if there were never so little cause of displeasure and unkindnesse" (C3). The Earl and Lady ignored the community's dislike and suspicion of the Flowers until they themselves began to suspect them. Lady Manners, disgusted by Margaret's lewd lifestyle, fired her mother, Joan, and "gave her forty shillings, a bolster, and a mattresse of wooll: commanding her to goe home" (C4v).

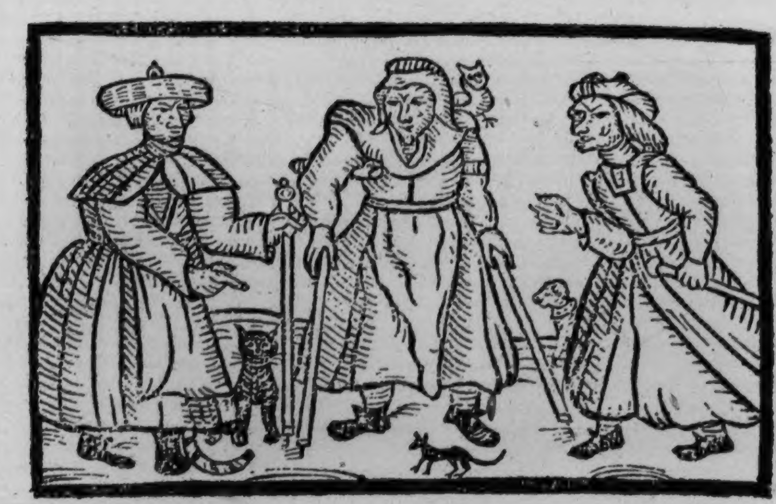

Figure 21: Ann Baker, Joane Willimot, and Ellen Greene from The wonderful discouerie of the witchcrafts of Margaret and Phillip Flower *(1618)*

She began to curse the Manners, and all their acquaintances turned their backs on this family. The Manners soon found all their cattle dead and themselves "many times subject to sicknesse and extraordinary convulsions, which they [took] as gentle corrections from the hand of God" (Dv). As their illnesses worsened, Lady Manners miscarried, and their son Henry grew ill and died; they finally suspected *maleficium*, and knew exactly who had cast it. The Manners' own suspicions, not those of their servants and community, compelled them to accuse the Flowers; they felt no need to protect the frenzied masses, but moved with speed and dexterity when it came to protecting their own skins.

Long service to a family or community was not enough to keep women safe from accusations of witchcraft; in many cases it provided a wealth of minor slights, antagonism, and suspicion to draw from. Elite accusers were often in a position to collect and manipulate information about those who worked in or around their households. Mother Sutton (d.1613), for example, was a hog-herder for over twenty years,

> in which service she continued long, not without commendations for her dutiful care had therein. And though many cattle oftentimes miscarried, and were taken with staggerings, frenzies and other diseases, to their

> confusions and impoverishing of the owners, yet she not till of late suspected to be a cause thereof, though since it hath evident been proved against her (A4).

Nonetheless, when Master Engers claimed that a crazy skipping hog was stalking him, Mother Sutton's long tenure as a local worker was easily converted into proof that she and her daughter Mary were using malefic magic against him, his servant, and his son.

Witches Apprehended trumpets the honor of having caught the Suttons, while the subtitle ("With a strange and most true trial how to know whether a woman be a witch or not") invites its readers to see how the community proved there were witches in its midst, while acting as a guide to other communities for doing the same. Mother Sutton's good reputation, according to the pamphleteer, was based on years of cunning and deceit. After a few encounters with the diabolical sow, one of Enger's servants "fell into talk of Mother Sutton and Mary Sutton, her daughter, of what pranks he had heard they had played thereabouts in the Country, as also what accidents had befallen him and his fellow as they had passed to and from Bedford" (B2v). Master Engers and his community soon decided that the Suttons were witches, and set about proving it through coercion, beating, kidnapping, and dunking.[35] The rules of procedure for dunking these alleged witches came from a "gentleman, a friend of his, forth of the North . . . traveling towards London" (C2); this gentleman friend, because of his critical distance from the situation, and his alleged semi-scientific knowledge of witch-testing, became the ultimate elite authority on the Suttons' spiritual allegiance. Under his tutelage, accusation transformed into irrefutable proof, and suspicion transformed into vindication. The outsider's word became truth – from the top down.

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[35] Swimming criminals and witches in England was actually illegal at this time; "according to English Law, ordeal by swimming had been illegal ever since it was abolished by Henry III in 1219" (Deacon 116). It reappeared as a semi-authorized test with James' *Demonologie,* and was practiced later by Matthew Hopkins as one of his witch-finding tests. Swimming the Sutton women appears here as an act of mob mentality, like lynching, and is anomalous among normal contemporary practices.

Mother and Mary Sutton were sent to Bedford gaol, tried for witchcraft and executed. Mob rule, enacted by Master Engler and his men, had already identified, tried and convicted them as witches. The details of their confessions, and of the legal process of trying, convicting, and executing these women, are allotted only fifteen lines in the nineteen-page tract. The pamphleteer's rapid-fire conclusion emphasizes how the community's recognition and trial of the Sutton women were the real test and proof of the diabolic agency; actual prosecution seems like an after-thought, to legalize their executions.

To Helpe Her to an Husband: A Case Study in Elite Accusations

James Sharpe notes that there were only "twenty cases [of witchcraft] in the 1620s, and nineteen in the 1630s. The two middle decades of the seventeenth century saw a revival in prosecutions, mainly due to a large outbreak in Essex in 1645, associated with Matthew Hopkins, and a local panic in Kent in the 1650s" (108). One cannot conduct an investigation on witchcraft and community without considering how the self-styled Witch Finder General, Matthew Hopkins, redefined and organized the local witch-hunt. The *Dictionary of National Biography* states that "little is known of him [Hopkins] prior to 1644," which Deacon reads as: "nothing whatsoever was known of him except for the last three years of his life" (11). According to Deacon, Hopkins' "appointment as official Witch-finder was granted by Parliament early in 1645"; his position, although completely self-proclaimed, "is mentioned in contemporary writings and seems to have been generally accepted" (103). Hopkins' "career as a witch-hunter only marginally exceeded a single year" (Deacon 66). How could one individual, a petty lawyer, lead England into a new witch-panic? Although Hopkins provided a terrifying momentum and focus for the gathering and interrogation of witches, he alone, as a single elite accuser, cannot be given credit for this dark success. He had a sympathetic political climate, an organized team, and a participatory community, supporting all his efforts.

The time and place of Hopkins' witch-hunts had a lot to do with their success. By 1645, "England had for three years been involved in an increasingly bitter Civil War which was, for many participants and observers, being conceived of in increasingly ideological terms" (Sharpe 140). Although critics like Wallace Notestein state that England was in "a state of judicial anarchy," others, like Sharpe, read this as an "exaggeration" (140). MacFarlane posits that Notestein's comment is based on his ignorance of the Assize records for 1645 (courts were, in fact, held that year as usual) (142). East Anglia was, however, missing some of its regular judicial apparatus, "notably the presence of assize judges, were lacking in the key early stages" of the examination process (140). This lack of official supervision for early judicial measures allowed Hopkins to move quickly through the interrogation and condemnation process, which, as Barbara Rosen asserts, was "the first and last time . . . a professional witch-finder . . . was able to use torture in his examinations; the assizes had been suspended and trials were had before the justices of the peace" (28). Moreover, Hopkins was supported by the local magistrates, who suddenly discovered themselves in possession of unprecedented power. Free from the usual checks and balances, Hopkins was able to insinuate himself more easily into the elite position of an authority on witches.

Hopkins' reign of terror was not a one-man show. He himself claimed he had a company and three horses to support with the profits made from witch-hunting; John Stearne, a man Montague Summers called in *The Discovery of Witches* (1928) "his jackal," was Hopkin's primary aide. Hopkins may have also had one woman traveling with him, Goody Phillips, whose assistance would have expedited the search for witch's marks (32). However large his own retinue may have been, Hopkins was still dependent on local resources to consolidate support for his method, and to supply him with the accounts of community tension which were such fertile ground for accusations. He may have had the unofficial support of some "Members of Parliament, such as Sir Harbottle Grimstone and other powerful Servants behind the Parliamentary Forces such as Thurloe and Nathaniel

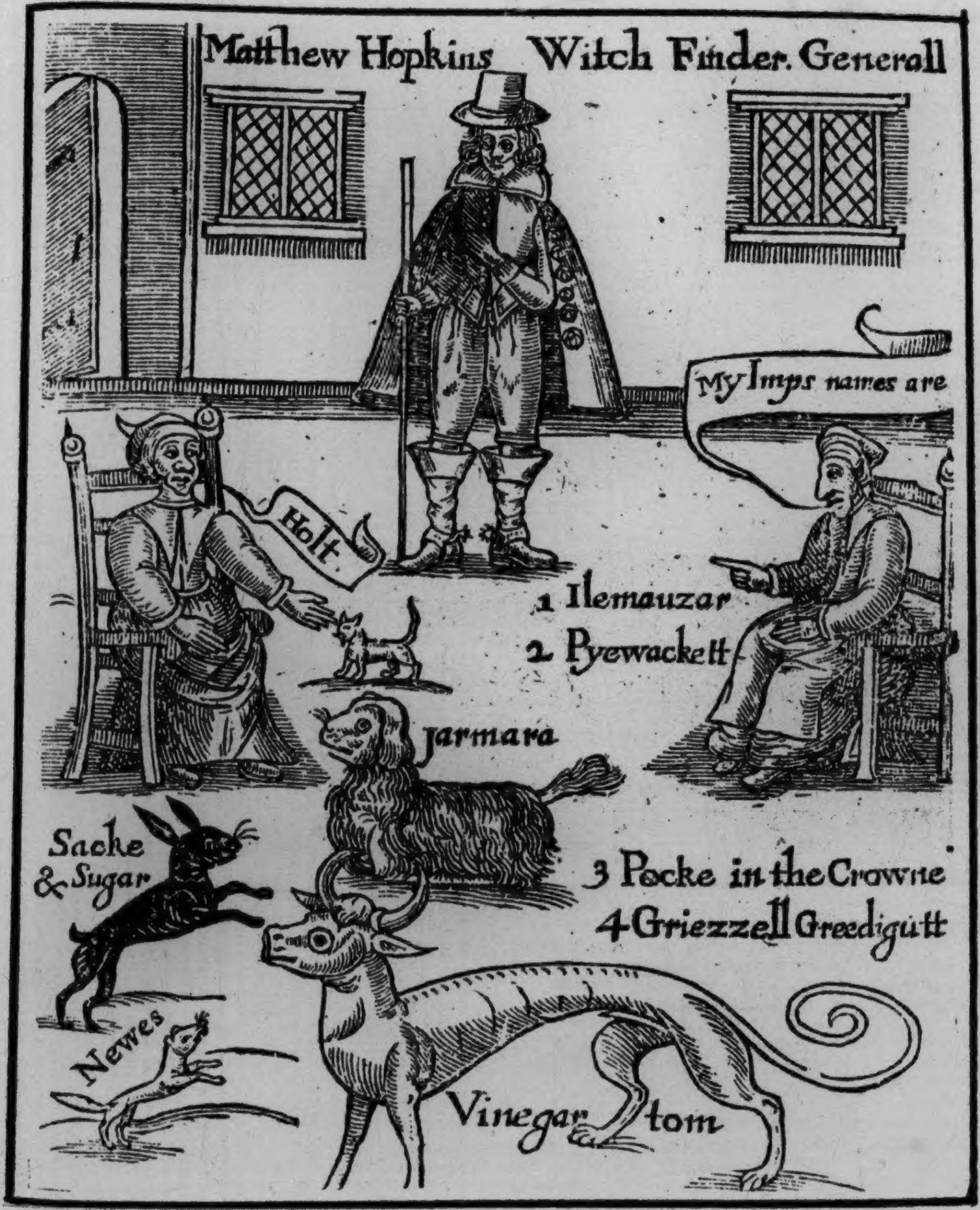
Matthew Hopkins Witch Finder. Generall
My Imps names are
Holt
1 Ilemauzar
2 Pyewackett
Jarmara
Sacke & Sugar
3 Pecke in the Crowne
4 Griezzell Greedigutt
Newes
Vinegar tom

Figure 22: Matthew Hopkins, Elizabeth Clark and possibly Anne West from The Discovery of Witches *(1647)*

Bacon" (103). He was also supported by local "clergymen [and] a prominent local [Essex] gentleman named Richard Edwards figured at the center of a number of accusations" (Sharpe 144). Hopkins claimed to have the Devil's list of all the witches in England; the names on his supposed list were obviously culled from a vast network of informants and witches, who would have been approached for information or had voluntarily come forth.

According to Deacon, "some sources suggest that some preliminary hearings were conducted in either the Thorn Inn, or one of Manningtree's hostelries, for in these early stages of his campaign Hopkins maintained his headquarters permanently in Mistley" (87). Hopkins was willing to entertain any accusations which came his way; invested with self-manufactured authority, and easily accessible at the Thorn Inn, he was able to, according to MacFarlane, find fifty-eight male and thirty-four female witnesses, including three clergy, in Essex (137). Moreover, as Deacon suggests, Hopkins would have done "careful preparation of the ground and a good deal of detective work" (76). Hopkins may have seen his role as witch-finder general as godly; however, his information was hardly oracular. In exploiting the pre-existing social tensions, Hopkins employed the same authority as Master Enger's knowledgeable friend from the North, and the same insider information as was fed to Lady Manners by the local gossips.

The participation of the community's women was particularly important to Hopkins' campaign; according to Sharpe, "[t]he searching for the witch's marks were made possible by the active participation of a group of women from the neighborhood" (144). Francis Milles, for example, testified that she found teats in Margaret Moone's secret parts, and "Mary Philips, Elizabeth Harris . . . Susan Burles, and Philip Tumnor . . . everyone of them concur with Francis Milles in her said Information, in that particular concerning the teats of the said Margaret Moone" (*A True and Exact* 24). The involvement of wise matrons was hardly unique in witch trials; there could be no search for the witch's mark without them. However, Hopkins' matrons, as frustrated as they were with being unable to see any imps throughout all their hours of watching (until the boss showed up), happily justified their pay-cheques by finding witch marks in places only they could see. Although Hopkins may have been running the show, Phillips, Harris, Burles, and Tumnor illustrate that witchcraft and witch-pseudo-science was very much a woman's game.

The first witch-hunt in Essex, in 1645, spawned at least three contemporary tracts, all of which feature Rebecca West's infamous testimony.[36] This case, one of the most intensely studied, was as close as Matthew Hopkins came to proving the existence of European coven-style witchcraft in England. MacFarlane writes that

> [s]ome thirty-six suspects, all women, were imprisoned or tried for witchcraft at the 1645 Essex Assizes. Of these, nineteen were almost certainly executed, none died of gaol fever, six were still in prison in 1648, and only one, a woman from another part of Essex, was acquitted and escaped free. Another woman, Rebecca West, was also released after acting as the Crown's chief witness. (135)

Besides being the chief witness, West, who introduced the coven-style gathering of witches to the 1645 case, also accused "Anne Leech, Elizabeth Gooding, Hellen Clark, Anne West . . . [and] Elizabeth Clark" of meeting together with their imps to plot revenge on those who had angered them (*A True and Exact* 12-13). The tract goes into the sexualized details of West's initiation into the witches' circle; the title page itself proclaims that the text is "shewing how the Divell had carnall copulation with Rebecca West, a maid, daughter to Anne West." Here, Mother Bennefield and Mother Goodwin are the chief witches, and Rebecca claims that they, along with her mother, Anne West, after making her swear to keep their secrets under pain of torture, "taught her what to say, the summe whereof was to deny God and her Saviour Jesus Christ, to renounce all promises of his blessings, and the merits of his bitter death and passion, to beleeve as they did, and to serve and obey as they did" (2).

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[36] West's story, with varied lengths and specificities, appears in *A true and exact relation of the severall informations, examinations, and confessions of the late witches, arraigned and executed in the county of Essex* (1645), *A True Relation of the Arraignment of Thirty Witches at Chensford in Essex* (1645), and *An Account of the Tryals, and Examination, and Condemnation, of Four Notorious Witches* (1690).

The organization of the ceremony, as well as the number of select and secret participants, was crucial to this aspect of West's confession. She was constructing a community of women, with both demonic and natural offspring to perpetuate. Although the uniquely sexualized and physical aspects of the 1645 trial remain some of its most intriguing and controversial characteristics, the claim that these women made up a *community* of witches was perhaps one of Hopkins' most nefarious representations. Although he never was able to prove the existence of an English witch's Sabbath or coven, in trying to coax one out of Rebecca West, Hopkins was attempting to redefine how English witchcraft functioned. In finding one witch, he hoped, rather than entrapping just her family or close friends, to undo legions of witches, whose very organization illustrated how much of a threat they were--and how crucial he was.

Regardless of whether accusations came from children or servants, from peers, or from the top down, witchcraft was a community affair. While theoretical works like Scott's *Discovery of Witches* or Richard Bernard's *Guide to Grand Jury Men* might have influenced witch-hunters like Matthew Hopkins and John Stearne, there could have been no trials for witchcraft if members of the community had not come forward with their suspicions and accusations. Witchcraft accusations within a community were convoluted and multivalent. They might be the fruit of long-standing suspicions, children's games, or modes of retribution, and amid these uses, they empowered the community to do something about perceived threats in their midst. The witch became a witch when her community recognized her as such. No women studied in this chapter advertised themselves as witches for financial or social gain; they became witches when accused of witchcraft. Whether they themselves validated or denied the accusations, in a very real way, these women's subject positions, at least for the duration of public suspicion and of their trials, were created by those around them.

Godly Women / Godly Communities

If the witch achieved recognition through her community, the prophet became recognized by creating a community around her. The purpose of prophecy is the reception and distribution of the prophetic message to the rest of God's children; an unspoken prophecy is a failed one. In *Visions of God*, Karen Armstrong compellingly argues that "unlike the mystic, the prophetic visionary believes that [she] undergoes this fearful experience for the sake of mankind: God does not send these revelations for their own edification but for the sake of their people" (175). Prophets, she argues, are reformers, "not passive recipients of a message from on high. They [are] engaged in a creative and demanding attempt to revise the religion of their day and transform it from within" (176). Community recognition of prophetic identity was based on a number of factors. Here, I will explore two major factors which influenced prophetic recognition: creating a community through an audience of spoken and written prophecy, and becoming part of a community of the devout who shared common beliefs.

Choosing Teams | Calling out Players

The prophets studied in this dissertation were often part of the fringe; they found (sometimes temporary or tenuous) community as members of radical sects. Membership in a sect in no way guaranteed free religious or prophetic expression. Seventeenth-century English sects were often under attack for being radical, unruly organizations. Shunned by the mainstream Anglican Church and government bureaucracy, members of sects were aware that attending a religious meeting was, under the Conventicle Act of 1664, punishable by imprisonment. Because of external and internal pressure, often the mood within a sect was not utopian, either. Sects were often divisive; infighting over leadership and policy split memberships which were, as often as not, transient in any case. Numerous women record being members of a variety of sects before finally finding one which suited them. Whatever spiritual equality women found there was not guaranteed to last, nor was recognition as a prophet. In fact, "many 'second-generation' Quakers disapproved of the early founders' writings because they believed these laments to emanate from fanatically inclined representatives . . . [and] they strove to check them through the Morning Meeting" (Ezell 158).

Nigel Smith writes that sectarians and "non-conformists lived with a paradox: they stressed the spontaneity and immediacy of inspired speech as the Holy Spirit moved them, but most of them accepted the printed Bible as the record of divine truth" (413). This paradox was, however, partially reconciled with the public act of prophesying and the publication of prophecy; immediate, unmediated prophecy could be captured in some way, to edify those not actually present. However, the two acts (the inspired speech and the publication) also reached out beyond the prophet, and created a community around her--one which she could herself inspire and persuade to the same beliefs. For the ecstatic prophet, validation often began within the family and the home; visiting ministers, well-wishers, and gawkers multiplied her audience, and in turn, her sphere of influence.

For erudite preachers like Mary Cary, her peers became her community. She dedicated *Little Horn's Doom and Downfall* to Elizabeth Cromwell, Bridget Ireton, and Margaret Rolle. Cary sought their support, not only to ingratiate herself with powerful women, but to acquire the validation of powerful peers. Quaker prophets often traveled in pairs, thus bringing at least a little bit of community and validation with them; Priscilla Cotton and Mary Cole, and Katherine Evans and Sarah Cheevers, supported each other and shared the reality of their spiritual gift. Other Quakers, like Rebecca Travers, found validation in the greater Quaker community; likewise, prophets like Mary Howgill maintained contact with Margaret Fell, their spiritual mother. Many Quakers, like Mary Howgill and Martha Simmonds, had neither community support nor striking physical manifestations of their spiritual worth as validation. As a result, they were rejected by their own communities. This rejection, however, henceforth became part of their justification;

they embraced suffering because they suffered for God and as God did. Even in the act of repudiation, the community participated in confirming the identity of the prophet.

Female prophets believed their prophetic messages were true and urgent, and that they were the crucial messengers. Although the meaning of prophecy differed among the various sects operating in early modern England, the prophet herself became part of its meaning. The General and Particular Baptists, Diggers, Fifth Monarchists, Jacobites, Levellers, Lollards, Muggletonians, Puritans, Quakers, Ranters, and Biddlians, among others, were all operative around the English Civil Wars.[37] Phyllis Mack writes that, for the Ranters, as represented in Abiezer Coppe's writings, "spiritual knowledge and female prophecy were both linked to the transcendence of social and intellectual categories" (66-67). Female spiritual expression, and its radical nature, helped define this radical sect. Conversely Diggers, Mack argues, although radical in terms of social reform, were very conservative when it came to women's rights, firmly locating women without authority and within the nuclear family (72). There were, Mack asserts, no female Digger prophets, nor did any Muggletonian women prophesy (74). However, Baptists like Mrs. Attaway, Quakers like Esther Biddle, Fifth Monarchists like Anna Trapnel, and Puritans like Sarah Wight all made their way into the prophetic ring (94-95). In order to understand how prophecy was validated, it is crucial to understand something about the sects themselves, and how visionary women functioned within and through their publications, representing the tenets of these oftentimes divisive and radical organizations.

Hinds writes that "the most well-worn word associated with Puritanism is 'individualism,' used to indicate the direct relationship of the individual believer with God, unmediated by any priest so that each becomes responsible for his or her own soul and salvation" (45). Hinds argues convincingly that Puritanism did bypass gendered social and ecclesiastical norms, separating the world into the elect and the unregenerate.

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[37] The order and some of the basic information about these sects comes from <http://www.exlibris.org/nonconform/engdis/>.

In matters of the soul, an elect woman was equal with an elect man, even if their positions at home remained basically the same (46). R. H. Tawney points out that, "while the revelation of God to the individual soul is the center of all religion, the essence of Puritan theology was that it made it not only the center, but the circumference and substance, dismissing as dross and vanity all else but this secret solitary communion" (qtd. Hinds 46). Sarah Wight's claim that her sense of selfhood was effaced when she prophesied for God can be read as an example of the centrality of revelation within Puritanism. Although there was intense interest in the condition of her body and personal opinions while she was prophesying, she had her greatest prophetic authority while in a trance, an authority which then spilled over into her lucid states. The world outside revelation became an annoyance to her when she was prophesying.

Wight's position as a counselor to London's lost sheep differed from the normative power dynamics of confession, penance, and redemption. Although Wight offered advice to the confused and disinherited, she did not suggest penance. Rather, her advice drew on personal experience and biblical precedent. Sarah Wight's "relationship to her female visitors, on the whole, is a mutual (leveling) exchange of shared experience. The conversations have a gossipy 'tit for tat' quality" (Daily 449). Wight left the doling out of mercy and punishment in God's capable hands; the "women who came to her for advice and comfort did not, like the interviewing clergymen and physicians, focus on academic questions; their concerns were intensely personal—experiential—on the order of Sarah's own traumatic episode" (Daily 448). In positioning herself as the damned-and-redeemed sinner, Wight becomes an infinitely approachable counselor.

Moreover, her sense of her role as counselor appears to develop and mature. The dramatic conversation between a Maid and Wight, as recorded by the Relator on May 28, ends on the hopeful note of salvation. On hearing that Wight had been afflicted for over four years, the Maid concludes, "I may have some hope that the Lord may deliver me; because I have not been above two months violently troubled" (113). Although Wight's earlier dialogue (April 24) might be read as two women jousting with their sins, in most of the later dialogues, Sarah appears to recall her story only at the request of the women involved. During an intriguing dialogue on May 9, again recorded by the Relator, a Gentlewoman's question ("in what manner was his giving faith to you?") prompts Wight to retell her story (66). Afterwards, the Gentlewoman confesses that "all afflictions are for good to them that love God: but they bring me no good at all," quickly confessing that she does not love God (69). Wight swiftly brings the Gentlewoman and all sinners into a godly community by answering, "we are by nature far from loving him: we are enemies to him: God reconciles enemies" (69). Wight's immense popularity is apparent when she begins questioning the Gentlewoman: "[a]re you weary in your Condition?"—a query which she reiterates two pages later: "[a]re you not weary of your condition? Is it no burden to you?" (69, 71). Through these two brief questions, Wight acknowledges that she has heard what the Gentlewoman has said; she has witnessed her pain and can offer her the solace she has found in Christ. Wight also offers comfort in response to the Gentlewoman's upper-class, feminine lament of being "fit for nothing, I can do no work" (71). Although the crisis of a 'poor little rich girl' would normally solicit scant sympathy, Wight empathizes with her, saying that, "I could do none: and it terrified me" (71). She solicits the idea of community by identifying with the problems of her followers. The empathy and lack of condemnation in Wight's counseling opened up a forum where women could express their problems, whether spiritual or personal. Their conversation ends with the Gentlewoman's exhausted contention that "[t]here's no peace to the wicked," and Wight's reply: "[a]ll are wicked, till he makes them good . . . Christ is peace for the lost sinner" (72). Wight gives the Gentlewoman a chance to unburden her soul freely, and simply be heard. This empathetic witnessing is prevalent in almost all Wight's conversations with women.

Her counsel to the "Maid that was not born in England" is one of the most critiqued and problematic, because the woman's words are "sometimes guessed at," as opposed to being transcribed verbatim (122). The conversation may have been obscured by the woman's accent, or possibly because she spoke softly, knowing her words were being recorded in a very public space. Davies bases her criticism on Daily's reading of possible racism in Wight's dialogue. Daily references the "Moor not born in England" in the 1658 edition of *The Exceeding Riches of Grace* and assumes she is Dinah the Black, who is listed among the visitors. The word "moor" is not included, nor is Dinah the Black listed among the visitors in the first edition (1647). Perhaps the mention of this woman's race is Jessey's revision, eleven years after the fact. He may be trying to establish Wight as a counselor to people of all nations---expanding her influence and the global importance of her ecstasy, as the apostle Philip did when he converted and baptized an Ethiopian (Acts 8:27-39).

> The maid claims to be tempted to take her life:
>
> Maid: I am not as others are: I do not look so, as others doe"
>
> Sarah: When Christ comes and manifests himself to the soul, it is black in it selfe, and uncomely: but he is fair and ruddy, and he clothes the soul with his comeliness that he puts on it, and makes it comely therein ...
>
> Maid: He may do this for some few, but not to me.
>
> Sarah: He doth not this to one onely, nor to one Nation onely; for Nations must be blessed on him. He came to give his life for a ransome for many, to give himself for the life of the world. He is a free agent; and why should you exclude your selfe? (123-4)

Certainly, Wight's responses suggest that the woman might not be Caucasian, but I do not believe that this is the reason the conversation resists the personal and "shifts toward a more objective dialogue" (Daily 449).[38] Unlike the Gentlewoman (66), or the Maid who asks, "Was it so with you?"(107), this woman receives empathy because she does not ask Wight for experiential details. Furthermore, the woman's lament that she is "a dry barren ground" takes as much textual space as her grief over physical difference (124). Although the modern reader might fixate on the exploration of racial difference in the dialogue, the Maid's predominant concern may not be her race, but her spiritual and physical infertility. Although Wight is qualified to counsel on spiritual matters, she can know little about infertility. She simply claims that "Christ will poure water on the dry and thirsty land" and that God will bear her up (124). The advice she gives this woman, as for all those who sought her help, is benign, vague, and based in scripture. The nature of her advice seems less important than her willingness to counsel; Wight's method was her message.

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[38] The third entry for the adjectival use of "black" in the *OED* suggests that "Dinah the Black" might indicate only that Dinah was black-haired, or of a dark complexion. If this is the case, then Dinah's spiritual crisis is not that of an outsider, but an Everywoman.

While Puritans might welcome Wight's angel-of-the-house ministry, the Levellers were as much a political organization as a religious one; they wanted to influence public policy as much as spirituality. According to Mack, the Levellers "were grounded in the belief that the universally available 'Inner light' of God in humanity abolished all private property" (29). In *Literature and Revolution* (1994), Nigel Smith argues that "perhaps the most underestimated aspect of the Leveller movement is its involvement in journalism" as "clever manipulators of the media opportunities available in the 1640's" (64&131). Smith argues that by "appealing to many different kinds of religious radical, and signalling sympathy for those suffering economic hardship, the Levellers developed a montage of forms which emulisifed the Leveller cause on the page of the pamphlet"(136). Smith argues that the co-authored text was an representation of this union of meanings, and was an act of "textual revolt" like the revolts Levellers were themselves known to act in (136).

Although Levellers were not concerned with universal suffrage, women were active in the Leveller movement, "networking to mobilize petitions and vast demonstrations" (Mack 29). Katherine Chidley and Elizabeth Lilburne were two of the most prominent Leveller women. Levellers, according to Davies, had a community organization which rivaled the Quakers (69). It had, she notes, "access to the web of Congregationalist cells, a system of militantly radical contact extending throughout the capital and southern shires, each cell having loose affiliates which could be called on for signatures and support"; women and printing presses could be quickly called into action (70). Leveller concerns were, as Davies posits, women's concerns; the cost of food, rent, taxation, and unemployment all appear in their tracts.

Although she was not yet a Leveller, in 1641, Katherine Chidley was a business woman, and wrote *The Justification of the Independent Churches of Christ* (1641) as a minister. Her "Justification" involved more than a vehement point-by-point response to Thomas Edwards' *Reasons against the independant government of particular congregations: as also against the toleration of such churches to be erected in this kingdome* (1641). She wrote a defense of the independent church as a community needing no patriarchal head, church, or priest to validate it:

> Therefore it appeares plainely by all that hath bin said that the Churches of Christ may be truely constituted according to the Scripture, and subsist a certaine time without Pastor and Teacher, and enjoy the power of Christ amongst themselves having no dependancie upon any other Church or Churches which shall claime Authority or superiority over them.
> (A2-A2v)

A community built with scriptural stones, Chidley argues, already has a head, which is Christ. Sharing in the joy and inspiration of his power both keeps them together and validates them as an independent community. The shared beliefs of the devout also enable them to ordain ministers as in other churches: "but many joyned together in a comely order in the fellowship of the Gospell, according to the Scriptures, are the greatest of all and therefore have power to ordaine, and to blesse their Ministers in the name of the Lord. Thus the lesser is blessed of the greater" (A3). Chidley goes on to refute each one of Edwards' claims and assertions, coming to the issue of whether the act of setting up an independent church will "make great disturbance in the Church, both to the outward peace, and to the faith and conscience of the people of the Kingdome"(C3). She argues that God "hath commanded all his people to separate themselves from all

Idolatry and false worshipping and false worshippers (and therefore it is no Schisme) except you will make God the Author of Schisme" (*ibid.*). The independent community separates itself in response to God's direction, like lambs from wolves, to remove itself from danger: "Separation is not a Scisme, but obedience to Gods Commandement" (*ibid.*). Chidley's response to Thomas Edwards illustrates how both autonomy and validation as a recognized community remained which would become on of her goals as a Leveller, as it was for all sects operating at this time. Although Levellers prided themselves on their radical agenda, the desire to be tolerated, if not endorsed, both as a community and by the community, remained strong.

The Baptists, like the Levellers, did not leave a lot of room for strong prophesying women in their midst. In *God's Englishwomen,* Hinds writes that Baptists were literalists, relying on a strict "literal interpretation of the Bible, and thus were tied most tightly by the scriptural strictures against women's public spiritual activity" (8). They did not argue for sexual and spiritual equality, and sometimes denied women the right to vote in church affairs or minister in practice (Barker 9-11). This does not mean, however, that no women spoke or preached or even prophesied within the various Baptist movements. Mrs. Attaway, for example,

> was a lace maker and a member of the Bell Alley Church in London. A contemporary Puritan critic labeled her as "the mistress of all she-preachers in Coleman Street", the most prominent Baptist Church in London. She began to conduct Tuesday afternoon meetings in 1645 and attracted large crowds who were derided by sober churchmen for "laughing and lightness". Mrs. Attaway preached to more than a thousand people on the basis of Joel 2:28 that when God's spirit comes upon all people "your sons and daughters shall all prophesy" and thus she was only using a spiritual gift. (Greaves, 1983:308, cited in Barker 1996)

Mrs. Attaway's ability to attract a large audience and open its purse-strings attests to her successful negotiation of prophecy within a group which, at best, debated the role women should play in spiritual matters. Much of Mack's information on Attaway comes from Thomas Edwards' *Gangraena* (1646) which is, she admits, a biased anti-sectarian tract. Edwards refers to Attaway as a lace-maker, not as a preacher, and emphasizes her infidelity rather than her prophetic ability (9). He recounts how, for amusement, two gentlemen went to hear women preachers, and when

> Mistris Attaway the Lace-woman had finished her exercise, these two Gentlemen had some discourse with her, and among other passages she spake to them of Master Milton's Doctrine of Divorce, and asked them what they thought of it, saying, it was a point to be considered of; and that she for her part would look more into it, for she had an unsanctified husband, that did not walk in the way of Sion, nor speak the language of Canaan. (9)

Although Mrs. Attaway's discussion of Milton's *Doctrine of Divorce* (1643) aligns her with a radical view on female sexual freedom, it also illustrates that she was a well-read, educated woman, not a lascivious tub-preacher as Edwards portrays her.[39] She herself initiated the conversation on Milton, not her "Gentlemen" listeners; she was both displaying her worldliness and positioning herself as an equal to the men she conversed with. Attaway was looking for a community of like-minded peers with which to debate; she also wanted sexual equality to pursue a divorce on her terms, which were also, she believed, the terms of the godly.

The next charge against Attaway is that of being an unrepentant sinner; she "preached, that all the Devils should be saved, alleging that place in Zachary, sending forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein there is no water" (9). Although her audience objected with "what say you to that of Matth. 25. Depart from me yee cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the Divel and his Angels?" (*ibid.*), she retorted with a subtle exegesis: "that by everlasting in that place was meant while day and night lasted, but not eternall after day and night were ended" (*ibid.*). Attaway foresaw a future when all would be forgiven and all saved; the world would become a community of the saved because, in an imminent paradise, all sins would be forgiven, and everyone, saint and sinner alike, would be equal under God. Her position as an educated and worldly preacher, and her vision of a saved egalitarian future, were not necessarily supported by Baptists in general. Nonetheless, she, like Baptists Dorothy Hazzard, Sister Griffin, Mrs. Nethway, Mary Jackman, and Ann Turner, gathered, preached and prophesied regularly (Barker 9-11).

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[39] Edwards notes that Attaway ran off with someone else's husband. Her adultery, in Edwards' mind, invalidated any other belief she had; a woman with a sullied reputation could only preach in corrupt circumstances (9).

Conversely, Fifth Monarchists, committed prophets, saw it as their duty to help usher in the new reign of King Jesus, and build a New Jerusalem in England. David Loewenstein (2006) defines the Fifth Monarchists as

> the ultraradical millenarian movement developing out of the turbulent years of civil war and revolution, and led by such fiery London preachers as Christopher Feake, John Simpson, and John Rogers; Fifth Monarchists were committed to the destruction of the Antichristian Fourth Monarchy prophesied in the book of Daniel and to the immediate establishment of Christ's kingdom on earth.To accomplish this, they were willing to use whatever verbal or physical force they deemed necessary, including encouraging women to prophesy. (133)

Anna Trapnel embodied a number of the characteristics associated with Fifth Monarchists. She felt the immediacy of prophecy; she originally prophesied for, and subsequently against, Cromwell, accepting her position as a saint whose job it was to interpret current events through divine eyes. She describes her own character as passive, and writes, with resigned acceptance, that her role as prophet was "antithetical to her own nature, but endurable since it is done in God's name" (Hinds 100). Although often emphasizing her own frailty with references to her inedia and need for bed rest, Trapnel speaks with great determination about war in *The Cry of a Stone* (1654):

> Upon the fifth of November last save one, 1652 ... The Lord again shewed me in a Vision, that many men of account should be taken away in the first great Battail; and I lay in this Vision from the first day of the week at night, untill the second day at night, and stirred not, nor spoke, but sometimes sang of a great Victory that I saw upon the Seas, Ships burning, bones and flesh sticking upon the sides of the Ships, the Sails battered, and the Masts broken, and many such dreadful things as to the Hollander; seeing many godly friends also dropping into the Sea, and their bodies beaten in pieces, it remained a long while to my view, but the Victory that I saw in the Conclusion, produced many Songs, crying out, oh, Who is God like unto thee? (A4v)

Trapnel claims this vision as her own; she sees friends drop into the ocean from her own viewpoint, and she sees the conclusion. God only showed her the vision; she herself produced the many songs inspired by it. What she saw, and sang about, was victory and preparation for King Jesus' arrival. Trapnel had, along with many other Fifth Monarchists, supported Cromwell, calling him "Gideon"; she too came to distrust and condemn him. She wrote about her subsequent persecution by the authorities in *A Legacy for Saints* and *Report and Plea* (1654).

Ecstatic prophets like Trapnel emphasized the homeliness of their discourse. "An examination of the power dynamics in prophecy," Elizabeth Sauer writes, "alerts us to the fact that such writings (and utterances) are produced in relation to interpretive communities—imagined or actual" (128). Trapnel mentions "home" eight times in *Cry of a Stone* and, although she left her home to evangelize in Cornwall, this trip was sponsored by her congregation (Hinds, "Soul-Ravishing" 122). Communities of women, however, were responsible for creating this feeling of home wherever she went. Trapnel had a community of women around her as she prepared to leave, ten of whom stayed up and prayed with her all night. In Bridewell, "she was visited by a group of women, one of whom moved into prison with her, staying for seven of the eight weeks of her incarceration (Mack 98). In *God's Englishwomen,* Hinds explores how the "emphasis on the spiritual, to the exclusion of the material . . . disturbed many male readers of women's early spiritual autobiographies" (172). However, since mentioning the details of their private lives, their children, homes, husbands, would have opened these women up to the "charge of vainglory and immodesty," most, like Trapnel, chose to leave these details out, concentrating instead on spiritual elements, which were, after all, the primary reason for publication (*ibid.*). Since, for many prophets, the immediate family had to be de-emphasized, the spiritual family took its place in authorizing the text.

Trapnel's *Cry of a Stone* is prefaced with the declaration that "it comes to pass that the things she spake, do not appear to men as they came from her, but as deformed and disguised with the pervertings and depravings of the Reporters" (A2v). Any of her words which, up to this point, might have been seen as flawed in some way, are now identified as mis-tellings. *This* text, on the other hand, promises to be an authorized "true relation," as perfect as could be taken down by a "slow and unready hand" (*ibid.*). A supportive community of believers surrounds her:

> Among others that came, were Colonel Sidenham, a member of the Council, Colonel West, Mr. Chittwood, Colonel Bennet, with his wife, Colonel Bingham, Captain Langdon, Members of the late Parliament; Mr. Courtney, Mr. Berconhead, and Captain Bawtrey, Mr. Lee, Mr. Feak the Minister, Lady Darcey, and Lady Vermuden, with many more who might be named. (a1v)

The pamphlet acknowledges how, for four days, Trapnel's prophesying was observed, but not transcribed. Notes were later "taken by a slow and imperfect hand" (*ibid.*). Trapnel is more than a curiosity; she is the nexus of a respectable godly community. Moreover, the pamphlet's authors apologize for any mistakes or inaccuracies which may have worked their way into the narrative. Her words are safe words to use; the community that surrounds her absorbs any shock waves that may explode from her prophecy. They are her godly buffer.

The Society of Friends was a community unlike any other. Although the Quakers were born when George Fox converted his first friend, Elizabeth Hooton, in 1647, the sect flourished under Margaret Fell. Sometimes referred to as the mother of Quakerism, her organizational skills and connections originally provided a home base for the fledgling community. Believing that the inner light of Christ was already inside each person, audible to everyone who learned to listen for it, the Quakers were bold public speakers, zealous missionaries, and extensive writers. The society was in part defined by its extensive network of friends. Politically, Quakers saw all men as created equal within the light of God, and rejected social hierarchy, oath-taking, and tithes. During the early stages of the sect's organizational development, women were treated as equal ministers with men.[40] Quakers were, according to Smith, "best known for their decided efforts to publish and create and expand their spiritual community" (424). In Quakerism, the tract becomes an extension of the inspired speech act; word and text were designed to inspire and convert:

> Quaker pamphleteering grew in to a stunningly successful form of proselytization, with a sophisticated infrastructure of production from more than one press in different locations (to avoid the dangers of censorship), and with a deliberate strategy. Tracts were distributed in advance of the arrival of a particular Quaker speaker, marking a trail across the country: in the wake of the tract would come the living text of the Quaker prophet. (Smith 424-5)

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[40] The Society of Friends' transition from a more loosely organized collection of ecstatic prophets and inspired speakers, into a hierarchical, rigidly organized establishment, led to the creation of separate men's and women's meetings. A full analysis of the implication of this shift, and its implications for the Quaker community, is beyond the scope of this paper. For a detailed study of the transition, see Phyllis Mack's *Visionary Women: Ecstatic Prophecy in Seventeenth-Century England* (1992).

Members of this community supported each other through ordeals of travel, prejudice, and imprisonment. Margaret Benefiel writes that the idea of community among Friends involved a feeling of corporate unity (443); she argues that conviction was not an individual experience, but an "initiation into a group of believers." Quakers became part of a greater whole which defined self and spirituality (444). To be removed from the "body of Christ" was like being the limb severed; spiritual suffocation would ensue. In her 1660 publication, *A Declaration,* Margaret Fell defines the Quaker community through shared hardship and the desire for greater salvation. She begins her tract with their history of suffering:

> We who are the People of God called Quakers, who are hated and despised, and every where spoken against, as people not fit to live, as they were that went before us . . . we have been a suffering people, under every Power & Change, and under every profession of Religion that hath been, & born the outward power in the Nation these 12 years, since we were a People. (A1v)

Fell spoke to their collective pain because, as their mother, she felt it with them.

Fell's community was edified through shared affliction and experience, but also through perseverance; for twelve years they survived persecution, and it was that suffering from which they drew strength to remain a people. Fell's vision of the days to come, however, was significantly more hopeful. She, as the voice of the community, articulated a future in which all people share their tolerance and love of the inner light. In her vision, the community has grown to encompass the world. She begins her declaration in the voice of an erudite polemicist, the equal of those she addressed:

> We do therefore inform the Governors of this Nation high and low That we are a People that desire the good of all People and their peace, and desire that all may be saved and come to the knowledge of the Truth the Way and the Life, which is Christ Jesus, the Everlasting Covenant, which is given for a Light to the Gentiles, and to be the Salvation to the ends of the Earth, and all the Nations that are saved must walk in this Light of the Glorious

> Gospel, which hath shined in our hearts, and given us the light of the Knowledge of the Glory of God in the Face of Jesus Christ. (A3)

Although she argues that Quakers desire good and peace for all, and that that can be found in Jesus Christ, she slyly moves from polemic to proselytization. She pre-emptively draws the outside community into the Quaker community, by blurring the line between "we" and "all people" when mentioning that all saved nations "must walk in the light of the Glorious Gospel, which hath shined in our hearts" (*ibid.*). If England is saved, it already has Christ shining in its heart; if the inner light is beaming, England is already Quaker--it just has not recognized it yet. To persecute Quakers, then, is not only to persecute the Godly, but to persecute oneself. "George Fox. Richard Hubberthorne, Samuel Fisher, Joseph Fuce, Robert Sikes, Amos Stodert, William Caton, Gerrard Roberts, John Stubbs, Thomas Coveny, Thomas Harte, James Strut, [and] Ellis Hookes" all affirm that they speak in unison (A4v); Fell's voice is all Quaker voices in legion.

In *Trumpet of the Lord Sounded forth unto the Three Nations* and *One Warning more to the Bishops, Priests, Friars, and Jesuites* (1662), Esther Biddle also argues for identity through community affiliation. She claims that, like all Quakers, she has already surrendered body and soul to God; her writing challenges the King and his supporters to bring it on – they are prepared. Her tract relies, however, on the idea that any illuminated Quaker (not just recognized figures like Fell) can speak with the communal voice of all; where Fell presents herself as a community mouthpiece, Biddle authorizes the voice of every Quaker with the power of her own. Mary Garman explains the urgency and immediacy in Quaker women's writing as being "sometimes addressed to specific civil and ecclesiastical leaders, sometimes to particular regions or locales" (19)[41]; Biddle's tract unapologetically targets the highest authorities, pitching a unified hive-voice against the existing monarchical power structure. Her community, like the King's, can speak in the royal "we," and her community, unlike the King's, is on God's good side. Addressing the King and all those in power, she warns:

> Oh! The anger of the Lord Waxeth hot against all workers of iniquity, he will set his oppressed seed free, which cryeth unto him for deliverance; and know this, what cruelty soever be in your hearts against us. The Lord will confound it and bring it to nothing; for the Lord is on our side, and we fear not Imprisonment, Banishment, Fire or Tortures, or whatever the wrath of man can inflict upon us; for our hearts are firmly fixed upon the Lord, and we are freely given up in Body, Soul and Spirit to suffer for God's Cause. (130)

Biddle locates herself, as well as all Quakers, among the oppressed; God, she proclaims, rages against the treatment of his people, and she promises that he will avenge them. Her close and personal relationship with God, like that of all Quakers, positions her as one who fears no harm done by man; she had already surrendered herself to do God's bidding. Biddle holds up this prophecy itself as an example of God's will; she wants England's corrupt to hear this message. She has surrendered her body, soul and spirit to bring it to life.

Bad Weather / Bad Women: Community Breakdown

Although Quakers were often imprisoned for vagrancy or for gathering without permission, few were actually sentenced to death by fire for treason, or hung for heresy. They were, however, exposed to dangers that a tightly knit community could not protect them from. Peter Elmer writes about the dangers Quakers faced inside and outside England; many of the acts of violence they suffered were usually reserved for witches. Mary Fisher and Anne Austin were both scandalously stripped and searched for witch's marks by New England authorities (Davies 49). That these women, like Evans

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[41] Garman's introduction to the chapter on "Proclamation and Warning" can be found in *Hidden in Plain Sight: Quaker Women's Writing 1650-1700,* where she introduces Biddle, along with Sarah Jones, Margaret Fell, Sarah Blackborow, the "7000 Handmaids of the Lord," and Dorothy White, as women concerned with the immediate need to spread the message of inner light. She writes that "typically the author of such a tract would establish her credentials by claiming to be a prophet in the tradition of the ancient Hebrews" (19). Biddle locates herself within this tradition.

and Cheevers, were far from home, without the protection of family and community, made them vulnerable, and the fact that they were didactic prophets made them suspect. Although the harassment that Fisher and Austin faced was meant to be emotionally and sexually humiliating, the target of the search was really the sectarian community that had so brazenly sent these women out to a hostile audience.

In an episode involving an explicit accusation of witchcraft, the sailors on Barbara Blaugdone's ship thought she "was the cause of [the bad weather] because [she] was a Quaker" (21). Although they threatened to toss her overboard, Blaugdone writes that the captain warned them not to abuse her. She claims that the power of her discourse was so palpable that "the Man" was compelled to ask the priest to interpret the source and validity of her words (26). Like Christ calming the waves, she stilled and silenced her tempestuous audience with her "very true and very good words" (25). Mary Dyer was not so lucky. When she refused to leave Massachusetts after repeated warnings to stop testifying to Quaker doctrine there, she was hung. Since hanging was a witch's death in England, Dyer is perhaps an example of a Quaker prophet who was not sufficiently successful in differentiating her spiritual power from a witch's demonic abilities.

Elmer points out that Quakers also suffered local abuse, often related to concerns about witchcraft. They were assaulted and ducked "as for example at Mitcham in Surrey in 1659 when a group of Friends was attacked, and individuals beaten and thrown into ditches and ponds so that 'when they had so donne they said friends looket like witches'" (153). Likewise, Elmer reports that, between 1664 and 1676, "local Friends were regularly subjected to an appalling campaign of violent persecution by the magistrate, Sir William Armouer," who "mischiefously prickt severall women until he drew bloud" with what we can assume was a witch-finder's needle.[42] These Friends clearly threatened the status quo of their home communities.

That is not to say that the Quaker movement itself accepted and promoted all its members; some women found themselves dismissed, rejected, or reviled. If it is crucial to find prophetic authority first at home, what does it mean to be rejected by your own peers as a witch, a false prophet, or merely a nuisance? Mary Howgill, sister to Francis Howgill, was a writer and missionary who published two tracts and was jailed at Kendal in 1653, and Exeter in 1656. Her contemporaries, however, labeled her an "unsuitable one" for Quakerism and prophecy. She refused to play with the tropes of self–effacement in her texts, and wrote on the first page of her *Remarkable Letter* (1657) to Oliver Cromwell: "Thou art a stinking dunghill in the sight of God . . . and when the day comes thou shalt remember me and that thou wast warned of all thy evil" (A2). Although Howgill here demonstrates the strength and defiance of authority common in other Quaker pamphlets, she is seldom held up as one of the founding Friends or remembered as fundamental in the growth of didactic prophecy. Perhaps there was too much Howgill in her prophecy. Her own voice rings out louder than the reinterpreted gospel: "thou shalt remember *me* [emphasis mine]." She also "refused to leave the area where she preached as a missionary, even though she had caused confusion among Friends for six months" (Mack 203). Howgill preached because her inner light compelled her to; the needs and protocol of the sect were secondary. Even among the Quakers, who loudly asserted the universality of the inner light and, at least in the early period of the movement, believed in gender equality during testimony, a Quaker who spoke too assertively and too often might find the same rejection at home that many others experienced abroad.

Likewise, following the wrong leader into infamy could strip a woman of her prophetic stance within her community and outside of it, lumping her in with witches and gypsies.[43] Martha Simmonds' "reputation for 'witchery' was given publicity by the Bristol preacher Ralph Framer" (Elmer 156), in response to her outspoken support for rival

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[42] As Elmer points out, this is much like the episode in which Anna Trapnel fears the "witch tryer woman's" needle (152). However, I strongly disagree with Elmer's suggestion that this kind of pricking, designed to prove the witch's insensitivity and hence her unnaturalness, could be likened to the moment when Blaugdone is stabbed in the side in Ireland. Primarily, stabbing plays no part in the folklore surrounding the discovery of witches. I believe that the stabbing was a hate crime against a suspected witch; the severity of the act belies the breezy connection Elmer proposes.

preacher James Naylor. Simmonds, a "respected London prophet close to the center of Quaker activity in the city began her activities in 1659"; among other women, she started an argument with "two eminent male ministers [Francis Howgill and Edward Burrough] in public meetings" (Mack 197). Respectively, both men accused her of speaking "in her will," as opposed to the will of God, and of being "out of the truth. Out of the way, out of the power, out of the wisdom and out of the life of God" (*ibid.*). Like Ann Gargill, she refused to sit silently and act as a vessel for God, obediently following the male leaders of her sect. Rather, the strength of Simmonds' personality exerted itself until it was too much for her community to bear; she was disobedient, speaking loudly and often at meetings, challenging authority, and elevating James Nayler as the rightful leader of the Friends.[44] According to Maureen Bell's entry for Simmonds in the ODNB, Simmonds' "powerful appeal triggered a spiritual crisis in Nayler, who stayed at her house for three days, an episode leading to accusations by George Fox of witchcraft." She was soon a key player in Nayler's infamous reenactment of Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Along with other Nayler supporters, she cried "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabbath" while casting her garments in front of his horse as he arrived in Bristol (*Grand Impostor* 2). This moment fractured the Quaker movement between supporters of Fox and Nayler -- Simmonds fell further from respect and became a kind of scapegoat -- a symbol of what Quakers did not want to be.

However, it was not simply this event, or her continued devotion to Nayler, that brought Simmonds such infamy. After all, pillars of the Quaker community like Rebeckah Travers and Sarah Blackborrow also followed Nayler. Disdain for Simmonds was founded

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[43] Peter Elmer mentions Quaker women Margaret Parker of Aynho and Anne Blackling being confined with criminals and witches (154). Although contravening the Conventicle Act of 1664, which outlawed religious meetings of more than five people outside of the Church, was certainly illegal, it was hardly a crime on a level with the acts of "Felons, and Witches, and Murderers" (qtd. Elmer 154). The fact that sectarian Christians were imprisoned alongside witches illustrates the strong parallels between these dark sisters.

[44] Nayler, who later attempted to save himself by turning on the women who had supported him, accused them of being "wild spirits [who had] . . . wild actions and wicked words" (qtd. Mack 206).

on her uncontrollability. Her ecstatic, passionate devotion was reminiscent of early Quaker practice, with its bodily enthusiasm. Simmonds was palpably present in her prophecies; she spoke with a human, rather than a godly, "I." Perhaps her fall foreshadowed later changes in the Quaker movement, represented by the suppression of ecstatic utterance and establishment of separate women's meetings. Simmonds, like Nayler, represented a kind of uncontained public devotion which the Quakers felt needed to be suppressed before it caused more schism and scandal in their midst.

If the prophet must be validated by her own community, then this community has the power both to create and to destroy the prophet's identity. If validation is withheld from her, "all stereotypes of her gender and social position . . . instantly reappear and envelope her as if by magic" (Mack 207). Because her own community refused to accept Simmonds as a prophet, they had to de-evolve her into a seductive witch. Martha Simmonds was not like Margaret Fell, a woman whose power and influence allowed her to not only maintain a supportive community, but to spearhead a community herself. A woman who lost her community, not only lost her already public position, but lost her public identity. Whereas gaining a community allowed women to speak, losing one rendered them silent – and this was very, very bad.

Groupthink and Sisterhoods

The witch and prophet were more than the sum of their parts, and were created by more than their own agencies and spiritual relationships. A complex number of elements had to be set in motion before either woman could be recognized as a dangerous or notable spiritual player. These women needed to meet expectations, and for the position to stick, they needed to maintain them. Be it fair or folly, neither God, the Devil, nor the women themselves could independently validate their stances. That validation had to come from a very real and very vocal force – their communities.

In tracing the movement of witchcraft accusations through several communities, the many ways that women were pushed off the gallows--and the number of people involved in the pushing--become apparent. Women were drowning in potential accusers; their children, peers, and employers could and did testify against them. A community which believed it had a witch in its midst became a witch-producing machine. Each testimony was a cog in the rack which broke her; one accusation brought another witness forth. The witchcraft accuser was no more a mindless automaton than the witch who folded her accuser's words into her own confessions. Some must have been swept up into the hysteria, their illnesses a psychosomatic response to the enthusiasm around them. Others may have just chimed in, seeing the accusation as a way to explain past, inscrutable events. Finally, there may have been considerable pressure on witnesses to produce confessions. This does not excuse their behavior, but it does in part explain it. When your whole world endorses the sanity of one train of thought, disagreeing makes you the insane and aberrant element.

Just as the witch's community operated in chorus to build the witch, the prophet's community operated in a kind of confederacy: she gave her community what they wanted, and in turn, they held her up as a prophet. Her first believer may have been her own mother, but a mother's confidence in her child's specialness is not enough to convince many others. The prophet needed to gather a following, a circle of converts who not only believed in what she was saying, but proliferated her message. These people lent their names and reputations to authorize her prophetic 'chops'. In return, the prophet gave them something wondrous in their otherwise mundane lives, a miracle in their midst.

Prophets chose their communities. The sects they chose had an open door policy, one that, at times, seemed revolving, and at other times, could thoroughly close them out. Sects could try to define what, where, when, and how women prophesied. Sect politics helped shape women's words, but ultimately, the prophet had a choice: if she did not like the sect, she could leave. Whereas some women were ejected from their sects, some sects encouraged women to leave their homes on missions, and these traveling missionaries defined themselves by the trials and triumphs they encountered outside their communities.

Women became witches and prophets because other people saw them as such. They experienced a kind of celebrity which made them public property. When those around them all had a part in generating publicity, they claimed stakes in the women's lives and spiritual careers. Those stakes turned tragic for the witch, and burned hot and short for many prophets. These women disappeared when they stopped being recognized as public figures; the accusations took them to the gallows or off the page. When no one was looking any more, the witch and prophet ceased to exist.

Conclusion:
Conjuring the Words / Interpreting the Visions

Early modern English women who participated in witchcraft and prophecy had access to power which their peers did not. However, this project has sought to break new paths through the briar. I have identified not only what witches and prophets did, but who and what they were. Rather than looking at them as anachronistic historical figures on opposite ends of a spiritual continuum, I have identified the ways in which witches and prophets are similarly constructed as spiritual agents, and the relevance of these identities to themselves and their communities.

The form of this study has divided the construction of identity into four subsections (language, body, extensions of identity, and community) which move from the most intimate to the most public. Within these branches, I focused on witches before turning to prophets. However, I have done so with a complicated goal in mind. In an exploration which had to be synoptic to be comprehensive, I have separated the women and their branches of identity, in order to try to clarify the numerous, inescapable, and, I hope, persuasive moments of utter similarity and equivalence between them.

When we start looking at these women consecutively and in conjunction with each other, the linguistic, physical, social, and religious frameworks which so comprehensively defined them to contemporary and current critics begin to fall away. Moreover, the divides between possessed and obsessed, divine and demonic, monster and miracle, saint and sinner bleed into one another. Freed of what now appear to be such arbitrary divides, similarities come into sharp focus. The more we investigate the identities of early modern English witches and prophets, the more we see them no longer as polar opposites, but as tangential, and in some cases, as one woman. Not only does this revelation open up possibilities for studying witches with the same kind of recuperative and comprehensive eye as their prophetic counterparts, I believe it also requires that any study which looks at one, provides more than a curt nod to the other. To understand the early modern English prophet, one must also understand the witch.

Literary scholars seem to steer clear of witches, and even some of the more problematic prophets, because they have left us no urtext, no single, unadulterated, unblemished encapsulation of their ideas. Their voices come to us in translation, tainted with the agendas of accusers, examiners, relators, and other contributors to the discourse. There does not seem to be enough text in which we, as literary scholars, can hear these women's voices for ourselves. We seem to have surrendered the witch and prophet to historians, who can deal with their problems by situating them within social and political contexts, rather than within a continuum of women writers.

This study does not seek to deny the messiness of reading mediated confession or prophecy. Nor does it necessarily purport to celebrate translation as a means of publication. Rather, by telling story after story, by visiting woman after woman, I hope to have illustrated the idea that, by familiarizing ourselves with the formulaic way these women were framed, we can begin to read witchcraft and prophetic tracts as a genre of writing. Within that homogenizing generic form, there are curious and marvelous moments when women negotiate, incorporate, navigate, obfuscate, and negate the schema. Their voices, however momentary and minute, shout out from the constraints of generic conventions. To ignore the witch's voice because it comes to us in the form of a prescribed court confession, is as irrational as ignoring the prophet's words because they are encoded in scripture.

The texts studied here are, in many ways, representations of pop-cultural interests. The women studied herein were not representative samples of common-place English women; they were fringe figures, as interesting to their peers as they are to us. Their stories provide the raw material which is rendered into the stereotypes exploited by contemporary and current writers and critics alike. By studying these texts, we can see the creation and proliferation of cultural stereotypes which made their way into early modern drama,[1] fuelled tabloid culture, and influenced commonplace books. By studying witchcraft and prophetic tracts, we have access to the kinds of sensational stories which actually titillated the middle and labouring classes. Examiners, writers, and judges who prosecuted the witches may have been influenced by Heinrich Kramer and James Sprenger's *Malleus Maleficarum,* Reginald Scot's *The discouerie of witchcraft*, or even James VI's *Daemonologie;* however, these critics were almost exclusively speaking to a learned culture. Much as contemporary culture is absorbed from the bottom up, those most likely to point their fingers and yell "witch" did not do so because they had read *Malleus Maleficarum,* but rather because they had an understanding that the woman they accused was *de facto* a witch. The average Englishwoman would not be involved in the production of critical texts like *The discoverie of witchcraft*. However, *hoi polloi* were directly involved in the production of witchcraft accusations, and indirectly influenced their publication. The same is true for the production of prophecy. The spiritual and political turmoil of mid-seventeenth-century England opened up the possibility for women from the middling classes to begin to do the defining. Studying early English witchcraft and prophecy, regardless of who actually did the writing and publishing, is necessarily a study in contemporary folk culture, philosophy, politics, and religion. Like the water table, culture evaporates upwards, and rains back down; the belief system of the lower classes brought these women to the attention of the upper classes, who redefined and repackaged them, selling them back into their own culture. A study of early modern English witches and prophets shows us where the water came from, so we can better understand its transformation, and its influence as it falls back down into the culture which spawned it.

When we come to understand the equations within which these women spoke, we can begin to recognize not only how there exists simply another kind of literary genre, but how that genre begins to look similar to the others which we already mine to find the voices and identities of early modern women. Tract and prophecy are, upon further investigation, no more formulaic than structured devotional plays, inspired poetry, commonplace books, and travel writings, into all of which women fit their voices, and many of which, if published, would have had to go through an editing process of their own. Although there are dangers in attributing authorship to texts which traveled progressively out of the woman's own hands, there is a like danger in wholly dismissing them, or in patronizingly handing them over solely to the often anonymous men who wrote them. Although these women come to us from within the suffocating rigidity of literary architecture, they do come to us. They existed. The way they haggle with the literary formula illustrates their differences and, I believe, their worth to literary study.

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[1] Among the numerous plays influenced by witchcraft discourse are Shakespeare's *Macbeth* (1605), Thomas Middleton's *The Witch* (1616), and Thomas Dekker, John Ford, and William Rowley's *The Witch of Edmonton* (1621).

What do witches and prophets tell us about early modern England? The construction and interpretation of female public identity was a complicated and convoluted affair in early modern England. In a broad sense, this study elucidates how important the power of speech acts, the public nature of the female body, the prevalence of the ongoing belief in spiritual beings, and the role of community involvement were in creating their own celebrities. I have focused solely on public texts to illustrate how spiritual identity was created on the page as it was in the village. In many cases, public texts influenced each other; prophecies like Anna Trapnel's were influenced by Sarah Wight's published and public accounts. Likewise, the form and nature of witchcraft accusations moved both through a community, as seen in the Lowestoft case, and through published texts, like those influenced the Throckmorton family. The witch and prophet existed in early modern imaginations because they were public figures.

Because so much of the actual writing we have from early modern English women comes from women who had the time, opportunity, education, or support system to publish, studied concerns have often been delineated by issues of class and education. Women who could write and chose to publish were not, with the exception perhaps of Eleanor Davies, the kind of women likely to be accused of witchcraft. By studying witchcraft cases and narratives, we can glance into a different social sector of early modern England. In many cases, this is not a study of social or physical aberrations, despite the fact that some women and children are thus characterized. In broadening our gaze, we can see that witches were not the rejected, indigent beggars of previous critical inquiry. Nor were they the earth-worshiping, free-loving, healing women and magi of current pop-culture. In fact, witches were part of family structures and complex social networks. Although some may have been long suspected of grim associations, they functioned within their societies. Likewise, many of the others accused had no suspected history; they were brought to the table by the fertile practice of cross-accusations. When pulp writers stopped looking to the witch for material, they cast their eyes to the monstrous babies of impassioned sectarians and bed-ridden, angst-riddled reprobates. Prophets likewise became a way for divines and writers to cash in on England's interest in spiritual writing. Although prophets were not all prone and trembling pre-pubescent saints, there were few aristocratic takers for prophecy; already blessed with power, aristocrats did not need to wrest more from the hands of God. Prophetic women in England were smart, savvy rhetoricians. They were didactic and oracular, as well as ecstatic prophesiers. They gathered, supported each other, and walked their talk.

The witch and prophet belonged to communities and created their own. Like-minded women sought out each other's company in sectarian communities during the Civil Wars and Interregnum. The prophets were no longer willing to settle for a state-prescribed system of beliefs and practices. An exploration of early English prophets illustrates a changing concept of community: community expanded beyond parish limits to include spiritual communities, stretching across the pond and across the seas. Although she never had a coven, the witch had a chosen network of associates. Witches were active neighbours and citizens. By studying patterns of accusations, we can see not only how news traveled within villages, but how suspected witches regularly communicated and did business within their villages for years, and sometimes decades, before all hell broke loose.

Despite the critical attention given to these women, England's countryside was not riddled with witches, nor were the streets of London congested with prophets. They were not the rule, but they were far from freak aberrations either. What women spoke, how they looked, and who or what they were associated with, were relevant mainly in terms of how those relationships were publicly recognized by the majority. Before publications even came to broadcast the public/spiritual relevance of a woman's speech acts and embodied spirituality, there needed to be some kind of choice made, by the woman, by her family, and by educated observers or busybody neighbours, as to the relevance of her spiritual performance. Her seductive and nebulous spiritual energy had to be publicly interpreted. Once that was done, the witch and prophet produced what was expected from them. These women filled a very real and very public need for spiritual signs that characterized early modern England.

They were alternately and simultaneously monstrous and miraculous; moreover, they were tangible. These were real women. We do not know if they actually performed malefic magic or legitimately prophesied. No current or contemporary writer can prove if these women actually had familiars, spoke to angels, or if their curses were powered by demonic vengeance or divine retribution. However, these women acted as though, and were treated as though, they were real spiritual agents. The texts they wrote and those written about them emphatically assert that the words these women spoke had power to change the reality around them, and that their bodies morphed to adapt to their spiritual identities. The changes were real, physical evidence of the spiritual plane. This study illustrates that faith alone was not enough to convince sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England of God and Satan's existence and interest. They needed proof. When it did not volunteer itself, truth was manufactured with and within the voices and bodies of

England's dark sisters.

As a final thought, I have often thought that critics speak too softly when they talk about witches and prophets; they tread too carefully through historical minefields in an attempt to be as considered and fair as possible. Perhaps this is in response to lessons learned from the Margaret Murray controversy. Murray did a lot of things wrong, but I would like also to suggest that she did something right. As much as we might try, looking clearly into the past is always an impossible feat; we look back at fragments of information, with eyes cataract with our own bias and agendas, at women whose own identities shifted politically, socially, religiously, and personally. We try to do them justice, these witches and prophets, our own dark sisters, by trying not to make too many assertions, by trying not to inscribe them as they were inscribed by their own peers. We can see the danger in pointing and shouting "witch," or in raptly holding our breath to hear the prophet's song. However, we are ourselves throwing eggs onto the ground to justify our light steps. What Murray did right was to risk being wrong; she took a chance and made an assertion. Murray's fertility-worshiping witches may have only existed in her own texts, but she inflamed critical imagination, forced us to do better, and, in mistranslating, encouraged good academic inquiry to foment.

Historical and literary studies of early modern women are always ventriloquisms. As much as we try to let them speak for themselves, in the way we present their texts, in the places we focus, and in the delicacy we use to analyze them, we are, like it or not, speaking for them. The women studied in this dissertation were passionate, stubborn, witty, smarmy, and sometimes downright loony. They were thee dark horses and the justifiably enraged in their communities. They yell, plead, spit, preach, thrash, bleed, sing, gag, confess, die, and fall silent within the pages I've presented here. They lift their shirts to expose bodies decimated by ecstasy, and lift their skirts to the prying eyes of matrons looking for familiar-sucked nipples. They are thrown into water, and throw ashes on their heads. These women were accused of doing, were known to speak, and were victims of outrageous, ridiculous, frustrating things. In turn, one can not write about these women without taking chances, without being bratty, frustrating expectations, leaping on a tub, and pounding a fist.

The study of early English witches and prophets teaches us about how female identity was created for these women and with these women; they were spiritual, social, and political barometers for their villages and their country. However, how we write about them also forces us to become critical barometers. We can not tip-toe around the maelstroms that are these women. As such, as much as possible, I have tried to let these women speak for themselves; where I have had to speak for them, I have spoken with an emboldened enthusiasm that is, I think, befitting to them. These dark sisters were not nice girls, and if I've done my job right, reading this dissertation should have moments that jar; if I've done my job right, this work should let them scream.

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Anon. *The Wonderful Discoverie of the Witchcrafts of Margaret and Phillip Flower, Daughters of Joan Flower neere Bever castle: Executed at Lincolne, March 11.1618 Who were specially arraigned and condemned before Sir Henry Hobart, and Sir Edward Bromley, Judges of Assize, for confessing themselves actors in the destruction of Henry Lord Rosse, with their damnable practices against others the Children of the Right Honourable Francis Earle of Rutland.* London: by G. Eld for I. Barnes, 1619

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Bernard, Richard, *A guide to grand-iury men diuided into two bookes: in the first, is the authors best aduice to them what to doe, before they bring in a billa vera in cases of witchcraft, with a Christian direction to such as are too much giuen vpon euery crosse to thinke themselues bewitched. In the second, is a treatise touching witches good and bad, how they may be knowne, euicted, condemned, with many particulars tending thereunto.* By Rich.

Bernard., London : Printed by Felix Kingston for Ed. Blackmore, and are to be sold at his shop at the great south dore of Pauls, 1627

Biddle, Esther. *A warning from the Lord God of life and power unto thee o city of London, and to the suburbs round about thee : to call thee and them to repentance & amendment of life, without which you cannot see God : be ye separated from your priests, and from your idolatrous worship, and touch not the unclean thing, that the Lord may receive you ... and something also to the scattered seed of God, which hath been held in bondage under Pharaoh the Task-master : who am hated by the unwise, and foolish in heart, and am reproachfully call'd a Quaker.* London: Printed for Robert Wilson, 1660.

--. *The trumpet of the Lord sounded forth unto these three nations as a warning from the spirit of truth, especially unto thee, oh England, who art looked upon as the seat of justice, from whence righteous laws should proceed : likewise, unto thee, thou great and famous city of London, doth the Lord God of vengeance found one warning more into thine ear ... : with a word of wholsome counsel and advice unto thy kings, rulers, judges, bishops, and priests ... : together with a few words unto the royal seed ... / by one who is a sufferer for the testimony of Jesus, in Newgate, Esther Biddle.* London, 1662.

Blake, William. "The Marriage of Heaven and Hell" *English Romantic Writers.* 2nd Ed. David Perkins, Ed. New York: Harcourt Brace College Publishers, 1995. 103-9.

Blaugdone, Barbara. *An account of the travels, sufferings and persecutions of Barbara Blaugdone Given forth as a testimony to the Lord's power, and for the encouragement of Friends.,* London: Printed, and sold by T.S. at the Crooked-Billet in Holywell-Lane, Shoreditch, 1691.

Boulton, Richard. *A Compleat History of Magick, Sorcery, and Witchcraft; Containing, I. The Most Authentick and best attested Relations of Magicians, Sorcerers, Witches, Apparitions, Spectres, Ghosts, Daemons, and other preternatural Appearances. II. A Collection of several very scarce and valuable Tryals of Witches, particularly that famous one, of the Witches of Warboyse. III. An Account of the first Rise of Magicians and Witches; shewing the Contracts they make with the Devil, and what Methods they take to accomplish their Infernal Designs. IV. A full Confutation of all the Arguments that have ever been produced against the Belief of Apparitions, Witches, & c. with a Judgment concerning Spirits, by the late Learned Mr. John Locke.* Volume I. London, Printed for E. Curll at the Dial and Bible, J. Pemberton at the Buck and Sun, both against St. Dunstan's Church in Fleet-Street; and W. Taylor at the Ship in Pater-noster-Row, 1715.

Bower, Edmond. *Doctor Lamb revived, or, Witchcraft condemn'd in Anne Bodenham (Doctor Lamb revived, or, Witchcraft condemn'd in Anne Bodenham : a servant of his, who was arraigned and executed the lent assizes last at Salisbury, before the right honourable the Lord Chief Baron Wild, judge of the assise : wherein is set forth her strange and wonderful diabolical usage of a maid, servant to Mr. Goddard, as also her attempt against his daughters, but by providence delivered : being necessary for all good Christians to read, as a caveat to look to themselves, that they be not seduced by such inticements.* London: printed by T.W. for Richard Best, and John Place, and are to be Sold at their Shops in Grays-Inn-Gate and Furnivals-Inn-Gate in Holburn, 1653.

Boys, Rev J. *A Brief account of the indisposition of the widow Cowan (Witch)* 1712.

Byron, George Gordon Lord. "Don Juan" Blake, William. "The Marriage of Heaven and Hell" *English Romantic Writers.* 2nd Ed. David Perkins, Ed. New York: Harcourt Brace College Publishers, 1995. 896-971.

Cary, Mary *The resurrection of the witnesses and Englands fall from (the mystical Babylon) Rome clearly demonstrated to be accomplished, whereby great encouragement is administred to all saints, but especially to the saints in England, in the handling of a part of the eleventh chapter of the Revelation.* London: Printed by D.M. for Giles Calvert, 1648

--. *The little horns doom & downfall or A scripture-prophesie of King James, and King Charles, and of this present Parliament, unfolded. Wherein it appeares, that the late tragedies that have bin acted upon the scene of these three nations: and particularly, the late Kings doom and death, was so long ago, as by Daniel pred-eclared [sic]. And what the issue of all will be, is also discovered; which followes in the second part. By M. Cary, a servant of Jesus Christ.*, London : Printed for the author, and are to be sold at the sign of the Black-spread-Eagle, at the West end of Pauls, 1651.

Casaubon, Meric. *A treatise concerning enthusiasme, as it is an effect of nature, but is mistaken by many for either divine inspiration, or diabolical possession by Meric Casaubon ...,* London : Printed by R.D. and are to be sold by Tho. Johnson ..., 1655.

Channel, Eleanor. *A message from God, by a dumb woman to his Highness the Lord Protector.Ttogether with a word of advice to the Commons of England and Wales, for the electing of a Parliament.* Published according to her desire, by Arise Evans: London, 1653.

Cheevers, Sarah, Katherine Evans. *This is a short relation of some of the cruel sufferings (for the truths sake) of Katharine Evans & Sarah Chevers in the inquisition of the isle of Malta who have suffered there above three years by the Pope's authority, there to be deteined until they dye : which relation of their sufferings is come form their own hands and mouths as doth appear in the following treatise.*, London: Printed for Robert Wilson, 1662.

Chidley, Katherine. *A new-yeares-gift, or, A brief exhortation to Mr. Thomas Edwards that he may breake off his old sins in the old yeare and begin the new yeare with new fruits of love, first to God, and then to his brethren.* 1645

--. *The justification of the independant churches of Christ. Being an answer to Mr. Edvvards his booke, which hee hath written against the government of Christs church, and toleration of Christs publike worship; briefely declaring that the congregations of the saints ought not to have dependancie in government upon any other; or direction in worship from any other than Christ their head and lavv-giver. / By Katherine Chidley.*, London : Printed for William Larnar, and are to be sold at his shop, at the signe of the Golden Anchor, neere Pauls-Chaine, 1641.

Cooper, Thomas. *Sathan transformed into an angell of light expressing his dangerous impostures vnder glorious shewes. Emplified [sic] specially in the doctrine of witchcraft, and such* *sleights of Satan, as are incident thereunto. Very necessary to discerne the speciplague raging in these dayes, and so to hide our selues from the snare thereof.*, London: Printed by Barnard Alsop, 1622

Cotta, John. *The triall of vvitch-craft shewing the true and right methode of the discouery: with a confutation of erroneous wayes. By Iohn Cotta, Doctor in Physicke.*, London : Printed by George Purslowe for Samuel Rand, and are to be solde at his shop neere Holburne-bridge, 1616.

Cotton, Priscilla. *A visitation of love unto all people London:* Printed for Thomas Simmons, 1661.

Crouch, Nathaniel. *The kingdom of darkness: or the history of daemons, specters, witches, apparitions, possessions, disturbances, and other wonderful and supernatural delusions, mischievous feats, and malicious impostures of the Devil Containing near fourscore memorable relations, forreign and domestick, both antient and modern. Collected from authentick records, real attestations, credible evidences, and asserted by authors of undoubted verity. Together with a preface obviating the common objections and allegations of the sadduces and atheists of the age, who deny the being of spirits, witches, &c. With pictures of several memorable accidents. By R. B. Licensed and entred according to order.*, London : printed for Nath. Crouch at the Bell in the Poultrey near Cheapside, 1688.

Dalton, James. *A strange and true relation of a young woman possest with the Devill. By name Joyce Dovey, dwelling at Bewdley neer Worcester. With a particular of her actions, and how the evill spirit speakes within her, giving fearefull answers unto those ministers and others that come to discourse with her. As it was certified in a letter from Mr. Iames Dalton unto Mr. Tho. Groome, ironmonger over-against Sepulchres Church in London. Also a letter from Cambridge, wherein is related the late conference between the Devil (in the shape of a Mr. of Arts) and one Ashbourner a scholler of S. Johns Colledge, neer Trinity Conduit-Head, a mile from Cambridge , who was afterward carried away by him, and never heard of since, onely his gown found in the river.* Imprinted at London: by E.P. for Tho. Vere at the upper end of the Old-Bailey.1646.

Dalton, Michael, *The countrey justice containing the practice of the justices of the peace out of their sessions: gathered for the better help of such justices of peace as have not been much conversant in the studie of the lawes of this realme: now the fifth time published, revised, in many things corrected, and much inlarged: by Michael Dalton of Lincolnes Inne, Esquire, and one of the masters of the Chancery. Cum priuilegio.*, London : Printed by [Miles Flesher, James Haviland, and Robert Young,] the assignes of John More Esquire, 1635

Davies, Eleanor. *The Prophetic Writings of Lady Eleanor Davies.* Ed. Esther S. Cope. New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995.

E.G., gent. *A prodigious & tragicall history of the arraignment, tryall, confession, and condemnation of six witches at Maidstone, in Kent, at the assizes there held in July, Fryday 30. this present year. 1652. Before the Right Honorable, Peter Warburton, one of the Justices of the Common Pleas. / Collected from the observations of E.G. Gent. (a learned person, present at their conviction and condemnation) and digested by H.F. Gent.*

To which is added a true relation of one Mrs. Atkins a mercers wife in Warwick, who was strangely caried away from her house in July last, and hath not been heard of since., London : Printed for Richard Harper, in Smithfield, 1652.

Edwards, Thomas. *Gangraena: or A catalogue and discovery of many of the errours, heresies, blasphemies and pernicious practices of the sectaries of this time, vented and acted in England in these four last years: as also, a particular narration of divers stories, remarkable passages, letters; an extract of many letters, all concerning the present sects; together with some observations upon, and corollaries from all the fore-named premisses.* London: Printed for Ralph Smith, at the signe of the Bible in Corn-hill near the Royall-Exchange. 1646.

Fell, Margaret. *A loving salutation to the seed of Abraham among the Jewes where ever they are scattered up and down upon the face of the earth, and to the seed of Abraham among all people upon the face of the earth.* London: Printed for Robert Wilson, 1660.

--. *An evident demonstration to Gods elect which clearly manifesteth to them I. How necessary and expedient it is for them to come to witnesse true faith, II. That after they have attained to the faith, it must be tried as gold is tried in the fire, III. It shews how many have departed from the faith and denied it, IV. That the standing of the saints is by faith in the Son of God, V. How strong Abraham was in the faith and how all that believe are to look unto him.* London: Printed for Thomas Simmons, 1660.

--. *A declaration and an information from us the people of God called Quakers to the present governours, the King and both Houses of Parliament, and all whom it may concern.* London: Printed for Thomas Simmons and Robert Wilson, 1666.

--. *Womens speaking justified, proved and allowed of by the Scriptures, all such as speak by the spirit and power of the Lord Jesus and how women were the first that preached the tidings of the resurrection of Jesus, and were sent by Christ's own command, before he ascended to the Father, John 20:17.,* London, 1666.

Fisher, James. *The wise virgin, or, A wonderful narration of the various dispensations of God towards a childe of eleven years of age wherein, as his severity hath appeared in afflicting, so also his goodness both in enabling her (when stricken dumb, deaf, and blinde, through the prevalency of her disease) at several times to utter many glorious truths, concerning Christ, faith, and other subjects, and also in recovering her without the use of any external means, least the glory should be given to any other : to the wonderment of many that came far and near to see and hear her : with some observations in the fourth year since her recovery : shee is the daughter of Mr. Anthony Hatfield ... her name is Martha Hatfield.* London: Printed for Charles Tyus, 1653.

Forster, Mary. *These several papers was sent to the Parliament the twentieth day of the fifth moneth, 1659 being above seven thousand of the names of the hand-maids and daughters of the Lord, and such as feels the oppression of tithes, in the names of many more of the said handmaids and daughters of the Lord, who witness against the oppression of tithes and other things as followeth.,* London : Printed for Mary Westwood ..., 1659.

Galis, Richard B. *A brief treatise containing the most strange and horrible cruelty of Elizabeth Stile alias Rockingham and her confederates, executed at Abingdon, upon R. Galis,* London : J. Allde, 1579

Gent, Frank J. *The Trial of the Bideford Witches: The Tryal, Condemnation, and Execution of Three Witches...*1682

Gifford, George. *A discourse of the subtill practises of deuilles by vvitches and sorcerers By which men are and haue bin greatly deluded: the antiquitie of them: their diuers sorts and names. With an aunswer vnto diuers friuolous reasons which some doe make to prooue that the deuils did not make those aperations in any bodily shape.* London: For Toby Cooke, 1587.

Glanvill, Joseph, *Saducismus Triumphatus: OR, Full and Plain Evidence Concerning Witches and Apparitions. In Two Parts. The First treating of their Possibility; The Second of their Real Existence. The Third Edition. The Advantages whereof above the former, the Reader may understand out of Dr H. More's Account prefixed thereunto. With two Authentick, but wonderful Stories of certain Swedish Witches; done into English by Anth, Norneck,* D.D. London: Printed for S. Lownds 1688.

Goodcole, Henry. *The wonderfull discouerie of Elizabeth Sawyer a witch late of Edmonton, her conujction and condemnation and death. Together with the relation of the Diuels accesse to her, and their conference together. Written by Henry Goodcole minister of the Word of God, and her continuall visiter in the gaole of Newgate.* Published by authority. London: Printed by A. Mathewes for William Butler, and are to be sold at his shop in Saint Dunstons Church-yard, Fleetstreet, 1621.

Graunt, John of Bucklesbury. *Truths victory against heresie; all sorts comprehended under these ten mentioned: 1. Papists, 2. Familists, 3. Arrians, 4. Arminians, 5. Anabaptists, 6. Separatists, 7. Antinomists, 8. Monarchists. 9. Millenarists, 10. Independents. As also a description of the truth, the Church of Christ, her present suffering estate for a short time yet to come; and the glory that followeth at the generall resurrection. By I.G. a faithfull lover and obeyer of the truth. Imprimatur, John Downame.* London : printed for H.R. at the three Pigeons in Pauls Church-yard, 1645.

Hale, Matthew, Sir. *A Collection of modern relations of matter of fact concerning witches & witchcraft upon the persons of people* (1693).

Head, Richard. *The life and death of Mother Shipton being not only a true account of her strange birth and most important passages of her life, but also all her prophesies, now newly collected and historically experienced from the time of her birth, in the reign of King Henry the Seventh until this present year 1667, containing the most important passages of state during the reign of these kings and queens of England ... : strangely preserved amongst other writings belonging to an old monastary in York-shire, and now published for the information of posterity.,* London : Printed for B. Harris ..., 1677.

Howgill, Mary *A remarkable letter of Mary Howgill to Oliver Cromwell, called Protector a copy whereof was delivered by her self to his own hands some moneths ago, with whom she had face to face a large discourse thereupon : unto which is annexed a paper of hers to the inhabitants of the town of Dover.* London: Printed and are to be sold at the Black Spread-Eagle at the west-end of Pauls, 1657.

--. *The vision of the Lord of Hosts faithfully declared in his own time, and the decree of the Lord God also recorded, which is nigh to be fulfilled : also a few words to friends of truth, whom* *the Lord is trying in this day, and smething to those that remain of that generation of men who improved not their day, but were rebellious aganst the Lord, and treacherous to his people : with a few words to the magistrates of this land now in authority.* London, 1662.

Hopkins, Matthew, *The discovery of witches: in answer to severall queries, lately delivered to the judges of the assize for the county of Norfolk.* London: Printed for R. Royston, 1647.

Hunt, Robert. *Popular romances of the west of England; or, The drolls, traditions, and superstitions of old Cornwall* New York: B. Blom, 1968

Hutchinson, Francis. *An historical essay concerning witchcraft: with observations upon matters of fact; tending to clear the texts of the sacred scriptures, and confute the vulgar errors about that point : and also two sermons: one in proof of the Christian religion; the other concerning good and evil angels.* London: Printed for R. Knaplock, at the Bishop's Head, and D. Midwinter, at the Three Crowns, in St. Paul's Church-yard., MDCCXX. 1720

James I News from Scotland, 1591.

James VI, King of Scotland. *Daemonologie in forme of a dialogue, diuided into three bookes.,* Edinburgh: Printed by Robert Walde-graue printer to the Kings Majestie, 1597.

Jessey, Henry. *The exceeding riches of grace advanced by the spirit of grace, in an empty nothing creature viz. Mris. Sarah Wight, lately hopeles and restles, her soule dwelling as far from peace or hopes of mercy, as ever was any : now hopefull, and joyfull in the Lord, that hath caused to shine out of darknes, that in and by this earthen vessell, holds forth his own eternall love, and the glorious grace of his dear Son, to the chiefest of sinners : who desired that others might hear and know, what the Lord had done for for soul (that was so terrified day & night) and might neither presume, nor despair and murmure against God, as shee hath done.* Published by Henry Jesse, London: Printed by Matthew Simmons for Henry Overton, and Hannah Allen, 1647

Jorden, Edward. *A briefe discourse of a disease called the suffocation of the mother Written vppon occasion which hath beene of late taken thereby, to suspect possesion of an euill spirit, or some such like supernaturall power. Wherin is declared that diuers strange actions and passions of the body of man, which in the common opinion, are imputed to the diuell, haue their true naturall causes, and do accompanie this disease. By Edvvard Iorden Doctor in Physicke.,* London : Printed by Iohn Windet, dwelling at the signe of the Crosse Keyes at Powles Wharfe, 1603.

Kirk, Robert. *The secret common-wealth & A short treatise of charms and spels.* (1691) Cambridge : D. S. Brewer ; Totowa, N.J. : Rowman and Littlefield for the Folklore Society, 1976.

Kramer, Heinrich and James Sprenger *Malleus Maleficarum* George L. Burr, ed., The Witch Persecutions in Translations and Reprints from the Original Sources of European History, 6 vols. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania History Department, 1898-1912) vol. 3, no. 4, pp. 10-13

Mather, Increase. *A further account of the tryals of the New-England witches with the observations of a person who was upon the place several days when the suspected witches were first taken into examination : to which is added, Cases of conscience concerning witchcrafts and evil spirits personating men / written at the request of the ministers of New-England by Increase Mather.* London: Printed for J. Dunton, 1693.
--*Angelographia*, or, A discourse concerning the nature and power of the holy angels and the great benefit which the true fearers of God receive by their ministry : delivered in several sermons, to which is added a sermon concerning the sin and misery of the fallen angels : also A disquisition concerning angelical-apparitions. Boston in N.E.: Printed by B. Green & J. Allen, for Samuel Phillips,1696.

Middleton, Thomas. *The Witch.* London: A & C Black, 1994.

Milton, John. *The doctrine and discipline of divorce: [electronic resource] : restor'd to the good of both sexes, from the bondage of canon law, and other mistakes, to Christian freedom, guided by the rule of charity. Wherein also many places of Scripture, have recover'd their long-lost meaning. Seasonable to be now thought on in the reformation intended.* nfo: London : Printed by T.P. and M.S. In Goldsmiths alley, 1643.

Moore, Mary. *Wonderfull newes from the north. Or, A true relation of the sad and grievous torments, inflicted upon the bodies of three children of Mr. George Muschamp, late of the county of Northumberland, by witch-craft: and how miraculously it pleased God to strengthen them, and to deliver them: as also the prosecution of the sayd witches, as by oaths, and their own confessions will appear, and by the indictment found by the jury against one of them, at the sessions of the peace held at Alnwick, the 24. day of April, 1650. Novemb. 25.* 1650. Imprimatur, John Dovvname., London: Printed by T.H. and are to be sold by Richard Harper, at his shop in Smithfield, 1650

More, Henry *Enthusiasmus triumphatus, or, A discourse of the nature, causes, kinds, and cure, of enthusiasme; written by Philophilus Parresiastes, and prefixed to Alazonomastix his observations and reply: whereunto is added a letter of his to a private friend, wherein certain passages in his reply are vindicated, and severall matters relating to enthusiasme more fully cleared.* London: Printed by J. Flesher, and are to be sold by W. Morden bookseller in Cambridge, 1656.

Munday, Anthony. *A view of sundry examples. Reporting many straunge murthers, sundry persons periured, signes and tokens of Gods anger towards vs. What straunge and monstrous children haue of late beene borne: and all memorable murthers since the murther of Maister Saunders by George Brovvne, to this present and bloody murther of Abell Bourne Hosyer, who dwelled in Newgate Market. 1580. Also a short discourse of the late earthquake the sixt of Aprill. Gathered by A.M.*, Imprinted at London: by J. Charlewood for William Wright, and are to be sold (by J. Allde) at the long shop, adjoyning unto S. Mildreds Church in the Poultrie, 1584.

Neville, Henry, 1620-1694. *The parliament of ladies. Or Divers remarkable passages of ladies in Spring-Garden; in Parliament assembled. Together with certaine votes of the unlawfull assembly, at Kates in Coven Garden. Vespre Veneris Martis: 26. 1647. Ordered by the ladies in parliament assembled, that their orders and votes be forthwith printed and published, to prevent such misreports and scandals, which either malice, or want of wit,* *hightned with snoffes of ale or stayned claret may cause, in the dishonour of the said votes and proceedings in parliament. Ja: Kingsmill Clar. Parliamen.*, [London : s.n.], Pinted [sic] in the yeare 1647.

Pagitt, Ephraim, *Heresiography, or, A discription of the hereticks and sectaries of these latter times by E. Pagitt*. London, Printed by VV. Wilson, for John Marshall and Robert Trot, and are to be sold at their shops in Corn-hill, over against the Exchange, and under the Church of Edmond the King in Lombard street, 1645.

Phillips, John. *The Examination and confession of certaine wytches at Chensforde in the countie of Essex : before the Quenes Maiesties judges, the xxvi daye of July, anno 1566, at the assise holden there as then, and one of them put to death for the same offence, as their examination declareth more at large.* Imprinted at London: By Willyam Powell for Wyllyam Pickeringe dwelling at Sainte Magnus corner and are there for to be soulde, 1566.

Pitt. Moses. *An account of one Ann Jefferies, now living in the county of Cornwall, who was fed for six months by a small sort of airy people call'd fairies, and of the strange and wonderful cures she performed with slaves and medicines she received from them, for which she never took one penny of her patients in a letter from Moses Pitt to the Right Reverend Father in God, Dr. Edward Fowler, Lord Bishop of Glocester.*, London: Printed for Richard Cumberland, 1696

Poole, Elizabeth. *A vision: wherein is manifested the disease and cure of the kingdome. Being the summe of what was delivered to the Generall Councel of the Army, Decemb. 29.1648. Together with a true copie of what was delivered in writing (the fifth of this present January) to the said Generall Conncel [sic], of divine pleasure concerning the King in reference to his being brought to triall, what they are therein to do, and what not, both concerning his office and person. / By E. Pool herein a servant to the most high God.*, London : [s.n.], Printed in the year, 1648 [i.e. 1649]

Potts, Thomas. *The wonderfull discoverie of witches in the countie of Lancaster With the arraignement and triall of nineteene notorious witches, at the assizes and general gaole deliuerie, holden at the castle of Lancaster, vpon Munday, the seuenteenth of August last, 1612. Before Sir Iames Altham, and Sir Edward Bromley, Knights; barons of his Maiesties Court of Exchequer: and justices of assize, oyer and terminor, and generall gaole deliuerie in the circuit of the north parts. Together with the arraignement and triall of Jennet Preston, at the assizes holden at the castle of Yorke, the seven and twentieth day of Julie last past, with her execution for the murther of Master Lister by witchcraft.* Published and set forth by commandement of his Majesties justices of assize in the north parts. By Thomas Potts Esquier. GB Harrison, Ed. 1612 (1929).

Prynne, William. *The sword of Christian magistracy supported: or A full vindication of Christian kings and magistrates authority under the Gospell, to punish idolatry, apostacy, heresie, blasphemy, and obstinate schism, with pecuniary, corporall, and in some cases with banishment, and capitall punishments. Wherein this their jurisdiction is cleared, asserted, by arguments, proofs, from the Old and New Testament; by the laws, and practise of godly Christian emperors, kings, states, magistrates; the common and statute laws of England; the consent of the best ancient and modern authors of all sorts; and the* *most materiall objections to the contrary, made by Donatists, Anabaptists, Independents, and Mr William Dell in his late fast-sermon, fully answered and refuted.* London: Printed by John Macock for John Bellamie, and are to be sold at his shop at the three Golden Lyons in Cornhill, neer the Royall Exchange, 1647.

Renyolds, John. *A Discourse upon Prodigious ABSTINENCE: OCCASIONED By the Twelve Moneths FASTING OF MARTHA TAYLOR, The Famed Derbyshire Damosell: Proving That without any Miracle, the Texture of Humane Bodies may be so altered, that Life may be long Continued without the supplies of MEAT & DRINK.* London, Printed, by R. W. for Nevill Simmons, at the Sign of the three Crowns near Holborn-Conduit: and for Dorman Newman, at the Chyrurgeons Arms in Little Brittain. 1669.

Roberts, Alexander. *A Treatise of Witchcraft. Wherein sundry Propositions are laid downe, plainely discouering the wickednesse of that damnable Art, with diuerse other speciall points annexed, not impertinent to the same, such as ought diligently of euery Christian to be considered. With a true Narration of the Witchcrafts which Mary Smith, wife of Henry Smith Glouer, did practice: Of her contract vocally made between the Deuill and her, in solemne termes, by whose meanes she hurt sundry persons whom she enuied: Which is confirmed by her owne confession, and also from the publique Records of the Examination of diuerse vpon their oathes: And Lastly, of her death and execution, for the same; which was on the twelfth day of Ianuarie last past.* London: Printed for Samuel Man.1616.

Rogers, Daniel. *Matrimoniall honovr, or, The mutuall crowne and comfort of godly, loyall, and chaste marriage [electronic resource] : wherein the right way to preserve the honour of marriage unstained, is at large described, urged, and applied : with resolution of sundry materiall questions concerning this argument.* London : Printed by Th. Harper for Philip Nevel, and are to be sold at his shop ..., 1642.

Rowley, William. *The witch of Edmonton a known true story / composed into a tragi-comedy by divers well-esteemed poets, William Rowley, Thomas Dekker, John Ford, &c.,* London : Printed by J. Cottrel for Edward Blackmore ..., 1658.

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